

THE
QUESTION
OF
Witchcraft
DEBATED.
Or a Discourse against their
Opinion that affirm
Witches,
Considered and enlarged.

The Second Edition.

By the Author *John Wagstaffe*.

Cic. Lib. 2. de Divinat.

*Nam ut verè loquimur, superstition fusa per
erbem oppresit omnium fere animos, atq;
hominum occupavit imbecillitatem.*

For to speak the truth, Superstition having
over-run the World, hath daastered al-
most every one's spirit, taking it's advan-
age from the frailty of man.

London, Printed for *Edw. Millington*,
at the Pelican in Duck-Lane, 1671.

Title Page

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Preface

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THE PREFACE. The zealous affirmers of Witchcraft, think it no slander, to charge all those who deny it with Atheism. As if forsooth the denial of Spirits and God did necessarily follow the denial of Witches: An Errour so gross, that it doth not deserve a confutation. This I am sure of, that the affirmers of Witchcraft, may more justly be accounted Heathens, than the deniers of it Atheists; In regard their opinion, doth necessarily infer plurality

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of Gods, by attributing omnipotent effects to more than one. And truely those effects of Witchcraft are so ridiculously absurd, and some of them so impossible for all the Devils in Heli to compass, that 'tis apparent, they are partly founded in mistaken interpretations of Scripture, partly in the knavish and gainful impostures of some men, partly in the vain foolish credulity and frightful fancies of other men. All which I hope to make appear in this following discourse: so that the Reader may plainly perceive, that although I readily grant and acknowledge Spirits, there is no such need I should grant their contracts with men and women. For these contracts being not to be known, but by their effects, I see no reason to acknowledge them, unless any one will undertake to give a good account of their effects: Which as yet I see no one hath done, neither from Scripture, nor History, nor solid reason: for I do not at all value

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Platonick Dreams, Similitudes, and fabling Whimsies. THE PREFACE considered. I Have often read over, and duly considered that Treatise of mine, which opposeth the absurd opinion of Witchcraft. Nor do I find any reason at all, to repent of what I have written, but to rejoice in it rather. For if the life of man be pretious, as without doubt it is; then it cannot be labour in vain, to endeavour the saving of innocent persons, from torture and death it self: especially by such means, as are agreeable to the Scriptures, and in no wise contrariant to Church or State. Indeed the Assertors of Witchcraft do frequently

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object Atheisme unto those that deny it. But I am still of opinion, that such a ridiculous slander, is not worthy to be answered: as also that it is no slander, but a real truth, to charge their opinion with the savour of Heathenism, which I shall thus syllogistically make appear: That opinion which introduceth more Gods than one, is Heathenish. But the opinion of Witchcraft doth introduce more Gods than one. Therefore the opinion of Witchcraft is Heathenish. That opinion which supposeth many Omnipotents and many Omniscients, doth introduce more Gods than one. But the opinion of Witchcraft supposeth many Omnipotents and many Omniscients. Therefore the opinion of Witchcraft

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doth introduce more Gods than one. That opinion which supposeth the Devil can create, transform, raise the dead, and prophesie of future contingents, doth suppose many Omnipotents, and many Omniscients. But the opinion of Witchcraft doth suppose the Devil can create, transform, raise the dead, and prophesie of future contingents. Therefore the opinion of Witchcraft doth suppose many Omnipotents and Omniscients. To the major I know not what can be answered, unless any one should be so foolish as to say, that the Devil doth these things only by Gods permission, and consequently is not equal unto him. As if any one could do a thing beyond his power, though permitted by another who hath power sufficient. Can a child lift up from the ground a bushel of corn, though a strong man who is able to do

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it himself, should stand by and permit him to do it? Or do we think, that the Prophets and Apostles in their miraculous works, did act things beyond humane power by Gods permission? Nay rather 'twas God himself that acted, but only was pleased to

make use of such times, when the Prophets and Apostles either lifted up their hands, or made use of any other actions, as signs unto the standers by. So that to me it seems plain, that if Witches can create, transform, raise the dead, and prophesie of future contingents; either God must do it for them, which is too great an aspersion on the Divine goodness: or the Devil must, which is too great an exaltation of a Creatures knowledge and power. The Major being firm, there is no way left for the Assertors of Witchcraft, but to deny the Minor, or else to give up the Cause. The Minor I know there are those that deny: wherein observe how unreasonable and unjust

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such men are. When they talk against those that deny Witches, they cry up the consent of all ages in affirming them. But I pray you what kind of Witch is it, that hath been believed in all ages? Not such a one as this or that private man, may fancy or define in his own imagination; but such a one, as was thought to be able to perform by the help of the Devil, those wonderful things mentioned in the Minor proposition. And that this is true; I appeal unto the Scripture, unto the antient Poets, unto Ecclesiastical History, unto the customes and manners of our present age. As for the Scripture, The stories of Pharoahs Magicians, and the Witch of Endor, are sufficient to my purpose. For in these places the Scripture speaks according to the vulgar apprehension or opinion of those times. As for the poets my own quotations out of them do plainly discover, what was the opinion of their ages. From them if we come to Ecclesiastical History, I might fill a

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volume with proofs of my Assertion; but shall at present only refer the Reader unto the Eighteenth Book of Augustin de Civitate Dei, and the Eighteenth Chapter of that Book; where he shall find it was commonly believed in Italy, that certain women (whom Saint Augustin calls Mulieres stabulariæ) could turn men into beasts. Some hundred of years after, about the time of our Edward the Confessor, or William the Conqueror, Peter Damian an eminent Church-man, took the pains to convince Pope Leo, that 'twas possible for women to do such things; using for his Argument, the appearing of Faustimanus in the shape of Simon Magus. The occasion of Pope Leo's doubt was, the report of two women in his time, that kept an Inn in the way to Rome, and were wont to turn their guests into beasts, that they might sell them for profit. You may read this pleasant story in William of Malmesbury de gestis Regum Anglorum,

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lib. 2. cap. 10. and in Fulgosus de dictis and factis memorabilibus, lib. 8. cap. 11. But now as to what concerns our present age, let every one consult his own breast, and his own memory; then let him tell me whether the raising of dead mens ghosts by Conjurers, the turning of women into cats, and their being hunted in the shape of Hares, to mention no more of this trash, be not things commonly believed to this day: nay, do not our very Nurses tell us, and have we not heard from our Mothers maids such stories as these? Insomuch that they are mingled (if I may so say) with our milk, and we are nourisht up in ridiculous byes and fancies. These things being so, I shall not valne what this or that private person takes a Witch to be; but boldly, yet not without reason, conclude, that the notion of a Witch, as it hath been taken in all ages, is grounded on

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such strange actions or effects, that it plainly appears to be heathenish, nay more, to be taken out of the very dregs of heathenism, I mean the vulgar belief. By J. W.

Chapter 1

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THE QUESTION OF Witchcraft DEBATED. CHAP. I. That the Bible hath been falsly translated in those places which speak of Witchcraft. That absolute and unlimited power, with which the Eastern Nations were alwayes govern'd, did require not only the force of Arms,

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but the craft also and tricks of superstition to uphold it: Nor indeed were standing Armies of greater use unto the Oriental Monarchs, for keeping of their people in awe, then Idols were and Priests, and the various impostures used by them; So various, that to enumerate every particular way of delusion, insisted on by the Heathen Priests of old, is a very difficult task to perform. Wherefore in regard it belongs unto my present purpose and design, to treat of them only so far as they comprehend all that notion of a Witch, which may be found in Scripture; I shall in order thereunto, reduce them into these four general Heads of Juggling, Inchanting, Conjecturing, Divining. Jugglers were such as performed strange things in the sight of

the common people, to their admiration and astonishment. This they did, either by Leger de maine, that is,

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slight of hand; or else by Magick, that is skill in Natural Philosophy; or lastly by a Familiar, that is, a confederated person privy to the plot, and assistant to the performance. Inchanters, were such as with charms or certain composures and set forms of words, did pretend by vertue thereof, to blesse and to curse, to do good and to do hurt, unto the parties for whom those charms were made. Now these two sorts of Impostours may not unaptly be called, the counterfeit Miracle-mongers of the Heathens, as the other two that follow may justly be called their false Prophets. Conjecturers, in their guessing at the event of future things, made use of Rules, drawn from their own or other mens observations, about the Stars, about the Fowls of the Air, about the entrals of sacrificed

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Beasts, and about many other things needlesse here to be reckoned up. Diviners, whom I here call so by way of eminence, and of distinction from Conjecturers (not ignorant that Divining taken in a general sense, doth comprehend Conjecturing also; I say Diviners) pretended to a higher and more infallible kind of Prophesie, receiving forsooth, their Revelations from some Divinity or other; Either from a God, or from a Dæmon, or from the Spirit of a man departed. Thus did the Heathen Priests, with subtle and sly inventions, magnifie the power of their Idol Gods, and seduce the foolish people to Idolatry. Wherefore these impostures were so hateful in the sight of God, that the Israelites are often in the Mosaical Law forewarned from them; as being those very abominations, for which the Lord

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did cast their enemies out of that Land which they were to inherit. But above all places, the Eighteenth Chapter of Deuteronomy is most remarkable, I mean the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth Verses of that Chapter, which in our English Translations runs thus. When thou art come into the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abomination of those Nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his Son or his Daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth Divinations, or an Observer of times, or an Inchanter, or a Witch. Or a Charmer, or a Consulter with familiar Spirits, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer. For all that

do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations, the Lord

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thy God shall drive them out from before thee. Now this place in Deuteronomy, is therefore highly to be considered as to my present purpose, in regard there is not a word in the Bible importing Witchcraft, in any other sense than the words of the Tenth and Eleventh Verses do. Wherefore if we consider things aright, Witchcraft is not to be found in Scripture, this being the true translation of those two Verses. Let there not be found among you any one that maketh his Son or his Daughter pass through the sare, or that useth Divinations, or a Star-gazer, or a Conjecturer, or a Miracle-monger. Or an Inchanter, or a seeker of an Oracle, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer. Here are to be seen three notorious mistakes of our English Translatours. The first is their calling a

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Conjecturer an Inchanter, which why they should I cannot at all imagine, there being not the least hint of such a signification in the Hebrew word [Hebrew omitted] Far better was it rendred in the old Translation, a regader of the flying of Fowls, for that is truth, although it be not all the truth: The flight of Fowls being but one way of many, which Conjecturers made use of. Whereas on the contrary to call a Conjecturer an Inchanter, hath not the least spark of truth in it: An Inchanter being the same with a Charmer, which follows in the next Verse, and is in the Hebrew [Hebrew omitted] a word derived from [Hebrew omitted] to speak, pronounce or declares and not from the same word, as it signifies to joyn to, or be in leaghe with; from whence some fondly imagine, that an Inchanter is one, who hath a league with the Devil. The second mistake of our

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Translatours is, their calling a Miracle-monger a Witch. The Hebrew word is [Hebrew omitted], which the Septuagint renders by the Greek word [Greek omitted], meaning an impostour, not a poysoner: For it is ridiculous to think, that Pharaohs Magicians, Jezabel the Queen, and King Manasses, did exercise the Art of poysoning. Thus in the Eighteenth Chapter of the Revelations and the Twenty third Verse; The word [Greek omitted] is neither taken for Witchcraft, nor poyson, but for impostures: Though our Translatours have rendred it Witchcraft, Now these Miracle-mongers, or Juggling workers of counterfeit miracles are

therefore so severely prohibited in the Law of Moses, because they acted strange things in the sight of the people, to confirm them in false Religions. Hence it is, that in the Old Testament, where mention is made of Idolatry, you shall frequently

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meet with Miracle-mongers and Southsayers coupled together. For the Priests of an Idol would commonly advance its reputation, by counterfeiting the gifts of Prophesying and working Miracles, pretendedly received from that God, to whose honour the Idol was erected. Nor let any one think that for the performance of these counterfeit-Miracles, they stood in need of the Devils assistance, for what they performed, either exceeded not the compass of humane Art, although miraculous in the eyes of the Vulgar: Or if it did, then it was not really performed, but a meer Juggling imposture. Such kind of Jugglers were those, who stood before Pharaoh in opposition to Moses and Aaron. For whosoever believes that Pharaoh's Magicians could by the help of Devils turn in an instant a stick into a Serpent, he doth ascribe unto the Devil an omnipotent

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creating power, equal unto his who did but say, let such a thing be, and it was so. St. Augustine I confess doth seem to endeavour the evading of this objection by laying down for a maxime, That in the Elements do secretly lye hid the seeds of all bodies, which when they meet with convenient opportunities, do put forth themselves and arise unto the just bounds and figures, due unto their respective species. From hence he doth infer that the Devil in turning the Magicians Rods into Serpents, did not create those Serpents, because he produced them out of their seeds. But by St. Augustin's good leave, though I should grant him, that the seed of a Serpent is in a stick, yet I would never grant him, that the Magicians could so suddenly bring forth this seed into act, for the production of a Serpent. 'Tis true, that men by their well ordering

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the seeds of Plants, may hasten the generation of such Plants, and the ripening of their fruits. They may also by putting Eggs into Camels dung procure the generation of Chickens. Wherefore 'tis probable that Devils being more skilful than men, may strangely promote the generation of several creatures, beyond any humane Art. But yet neither men nor Devils, in regard they act these things by the application of Matter to Matter, can

produce any creature out of its seed, without a considerable space of time. No, they must attend the Laws of Matter, and wait upon Dame Natures leisure; there being many successive alterations required in seed, before it can come to be the Embryo of a creature, and many also must afterwards follow, before that Embryo can arrive to a perfect shape. Now many perceiving how difficult it is to affirm,

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that the Magicians staffs were turned into Serpents; they affirm that it was not really done, but seemingly so, by a deluding Jugling trick of the Devil, who might conveigh the staffs away, and slip Serpents in their place. To all such as these I answer, that if they once recede from the letter of the Text, and say, it was a Joggle of the Devil, I may as well say, it was a Joggle meerly of the Magicians themselves, who did it by their sly and secret tricks, as the Hebrew word [Hebrew omitted] signifies, which our Translators have rendered, by their Inchantments. Nor let any one wonder that the Scripture should say, the Magicians staffs were turned into Serpents, in regard the Scripture speaks only according to the deceived apprehension of the standers by. Just so in the case of Samuel raised by the Witch of Endor, it speaks according

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to the deceived apprehensions of Saul and his followers: For neither that woman, nor all the Devils in Hell could raise Samuel, who had been dead and buried almost two years. As for those who fancy that God did then raise Samuel; 'tis a very likely thing indeed, that God should refuse to answer Saul, when he consulted him in wayes appointed by himself, and yet should answer him when he consulted in a forbidden way. Besides, if Samuel had been raised by God, no doubt he would never have said unto Saul Why hast thou disquieted me? for it would have been no disquiet nor trouble unto him, to come upon Gods Errand. Some there are who will needs have it to be the Devil in the likeness of Samuel, because Sauls death was foretold. To this I answer, that 'twas the woman her self, or a person confederated with her, who spake it at a venture

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knowing that Saul was going to fight: But as for the certainty of his death, it could not have been foretold by the Devil himself. The third error of our Translatours is, their mistaking a consulter with Oracles or false Prophets, for a consulter with

familiar spirits. The Hebrew words are [Hebrew omitted], which word Ob signifies iu Scripture, sometimes the gift of Oracling, and sometimes the person that hath such a gift. It signifies also a bottle, or hollow Vessel, and from this signification, I suppose the other came. For it is certain that Oraclers, when they pronounced their Oracles, did use to counterfeit strange kind of voices, that they might seem not to be humane. To this purpose 'tis not unlikely, that they made use of a bottle, or trunk, or some other hollow vessel, which they spake through, whereby their voices must needs be very

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much altered, especially if they were in a cave or room under ground, when they made answer to enquiries. These kind of cheating tricks are plainly alluded unto by the Prophet Isaiah, in these words; And thy voice shall be as of an Oracler out of the earth, and thy speech shall peep out of the dust. Here I suppose, the Prophet chiefly alludes unto the Necromantick Oracler, or one that pretended to consult with the dead: Who himself or his confederate, did therefore counterfeit a voyce, like the peiping of a Chicken, that it might the more plausibly seem to be the small voyce of a poor departed Ghost. This will appear more plainly, if we consider the nineteenth verse of the eight Chapter of Isaiah, according to the Translation of Junius and Tremelius, our own being, hardly sense: The words are these, For when they say unto you, ask counsel

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of Oracles and Southsayers, who peep and mutter; should not a people ask counsel of their God? Should they ask counsel of the dead for the living? Now as the Oraclers, when they pretended to receive answers from the dead, would piep like Chickens; So when they delivered the mind of a God or a Dæmon, they counterfeited other-guise tones. In which way of counterfeiting, some were such excellent Artists that they stood in need of no instrument to help them; in regard they could speak with their mouths shut, and their voice would seem to come out of their bellies, as if they had been really possest with a talking devil: hence they were called Engastrimuthians by the Greeks, as also they were called Euryleans, from one Eurycles a famous Impostour of this kind. And as Plutarch testifies, these Engastrimuthians or Euryleans, were antiently

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called Pythons: Now [Greek omitted] and [Greek omitted] in Greek doth exactly render the Hebrew Ob. Thus if we take Ob for an Oracler, and the Spirit of Oracling, we may very commodiously with Junius and Tremelius translate that passage in the Chronicles, concerning Manasses, where it is said of him, [Hebrew omitted] he made or set up an Oracle, that is, he ordained or appointed Oraclers. For the word gnashah signifies to make or finish. Wherefore because it would be ridiculous to say, that Manasses made familiar Spirits. Our Translatours have altered the true signification of gnashah, and translate it, though erroneously, as if it signified to deal with, affirming that Manasses dealt with familiar Spirits. But whosoever seriously views and considers that place, he shall find it a meer description of Idolatry, where there is mention of high places and groves, and of

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Altars dedicated not only to Baal, but unto the whole host of Heaven, as also of the setting up a carved Idol in the very house of God. Wherefore it was suitable to mention also that crew of men who were set apart by Manasses, to officiate in this Idolatrous worship; Such as were various sorts of Oraclers, and Miracle-mongers. But how Witches should come in here, I cannot tell, no nor how Devils neither, unless you believe that Devils made answer at the Heathen Oracles. Which if you do, for my part I must crave leave to dissent, judgeing them to be nothing but the impostures of men. And as Demosthenes did wisely observe in his dayes, that the Delphian Oracle did [Greek omitted], so I am confident if History be true, that the Hammonean did '[Greek omitted]', and that all the rest of the cheating pack did one way or other '[Greek omitted]'.

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Chap. I. Considered. The first thing which I find fault with in our Translatours of the Bible, is, their calling a Conjecturer an Inchanter. A mistake so evident, as not to be denied. And herein I took occasion, to hint the folly of those, who derive the Hebrew word [Hebrew omitted] which signifies a Charm from [Hebrew omitted] as it signifies to joyn to or be in league with, and not from the same word as it signifies to speak, pronounce or declare. So much it seems the prejudice of a præ-conceived opinion about making leagues with the Devil doth sway them, that they do not consider. The Hebrew words have oftentimes several significations, which have no dependance on one another, and that it is most likely, a

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Charmer should be derived from speech or speaking in the Hebrew, as well as in other Languages. Thus in Greek '[Greek omitted] is derived from '[Greek omitted] Cano, and from this Latine word Cano comes Incanto and Carmen, from whence comes our English word Charm. As for the old Saxon word Spell, it signifies nothing but Speech. Thus Gospel signifies either good speech, or Gods speech, take which way you will. The second fault I find is, the Translating a Miracle-monger a Witch: The Hebrew word is [Hebrew omitted], which I therefore render by the word Miracle-monger, because I would comprise it's various significations; for it doth not only signifie a Jugler, or one that deludes the eyes of the spectators, which is it proper signification as the Lexicographers do assert; but it signifies an Inchanter also, as appears in the fifty seventh Psalm. It signifies

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also, one that purifies and illustrates either Person, or City, or Country, from any pollution or guilt, and from the molestationr of evil spirits. Now the question is, whether these impostures were meerly humane, or performed by the help of the Devil. Some to concern the Devil in the buisness, urge the consent of Translators, who render the Hebrew [Hebrew omitted] by the Latine maleficus. To these I answer, that by Maleficus the Romans did not always understand, one that dealt with the Devil, as I shall have occasion to shew hereafter. But if the Translators meant so, they were byassed with the prejudice of a preconceived opinion; For what need the Devil be brought in, for the performance of things which were not real, but meer cozening cheats? As appears by Pharaohs Magicians, who by their secret and sly tricks (the vulgar Latine saith per arcana)

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did counterfeit such actions, as the Devil himself could not really perform, unlesse we make him a Creator. It being a creation to make a Serpent out of a stick, as well as to make Eve out of Adams rib, or Adam out of the dust of the earth. But though the Magicians jugled with Serpents, with bloud, and with frogs; yet they could not do so with those little creatures, which in our Translation are called Lice, but most probably were some other creatures, which could not be procured: for the true signification of the Hebrew word, is as yet unknown In like manner the raising of Samuel was a notorious cheat, as most Protestant Divines I suppose do agree. Now if Samuel did not foretell Sauls death, the Devil could not foresee so great a contingency. 'Twas a meer

contingent, that there should be a Battel. 'Twas far more contingent, that Saul should escape alive from

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the Battle, and afterwards be killed at his own request. None but an omniscient God could know this; Isaiah 41. and 23. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods. Now further to make it appear, that Miracle-mongers, as I call them, were not Witches in our modern sense; I shall urge, that he who seriously considers the Bible, will find, that those Impostures which our Translators call Witchcraft, signifie nothing but those arts or tricks, which were used to seduce the people to Idolatry, and to confirm them in it. Thus you shall often meet in the Bible with Fornication and Witchcraft joyned together. By Fornication and Whoredome is meant Idolatry, and by Witchcraft, the art of engaging men in it. The Whoredome of Jesabel was her Idolatry, and her Witchcraft was the maintaining of Baals Priests.

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arts of engaging men in Idolatrous ways, were chiefly Divination and counterfeit Miracles. Divination was performed many ways, but the two most famous were by Dream or Vision, and by looking into the entrals of sacrificed beasts. Neverthelesse though Divination and Miracle-monging be chiefly meant by the notion of Witchcraft in Scripture; yet in many places, we must also understand thereby, the terroure of Arms, the allurement of Honours, and Riches; in a word, all the Machinations and various Methods, used by imperial Cities and renowned Princes, to captivate the Nations round about them. Isaiah the Prophet in the 47th. Chapter and the 12 Verse, tells Babylon of the multitude of her Sorceries, and in the next Verse expounds it by the multitude of her Counsels. Stand now with thine Inchantments, and with the multitude of thy Sorceries, wherein

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thou hast laboured from thy youth. If so be thou maist be able to profit, if so be thou maist prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels: Let now the Astrologers, the Star-gazers, the monthly Prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things, that shall come upon thee. In like manner the Prophet Nahum, as Calvin expounds him, Chap. 3. v. 4. doth mean by the Witchcraft of Nineveh, all the Plots and Arts which a great City useth to subdue her Neighbours. Because of the multitude of the Whoredomes of the welfavoured harlot, the

Mistress of Witchcrafts, that selleth Nations through her whoredomes, and families through her Witchcrafts. And as Calvin expounds, concerning Nineveh, so doth Cornelius a Lapide expound the Sorceries of Heathen Rome, by which he understands the riches, honours and great rewards, whereby that antient and renowned City, did

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draw the Nations after her. As you may see in his Comment on the 18. Chapter of the Revelations, and the 23. verse. Moreover the Greek Translation of the Septuagint, rendring the Hebrew word, which I call Miracle-monger, by the Greek word [Greek omitted] makes much to my purpose. For [Greek omitted] doth elegantly signifie, an Impostour or deceiver; which signification is taken from the Colours, that Painters were wont to make use of, called in Greek [Greek omitted]. Besides it is very considerable to observe, that [Greek omitted] and [Greek omitted] have the same signification of Imposture. St. Chrisostome doth oppose them as Mountebanks or Cheats, unto [Greek omitted] a lawfull Physitian. Suidas interprets [Greek omitted] by [Greek omitted] and [Greek omitted] Hesychius [Greek omitted], by [Greek omitted] by [Greek omitted]. And Plato in his

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[Greek omitted] brings in Socrates disputing and maintaining, that Love was a great Dæmon, where amongst other Characters of this Dæmon, he describes him to be [Greek omitted]. In English thus, a notable cheating cozening Sophister. For I suppose that Socrates did not mean that he was a Witch, he being a great Dæmon himself, according to the supposition of Socrates. But now to come closer home, 'tis probable that the particular imposture, which is chiefly denoted by the word [Greek omitted], is that heathenish expiation or lustration of any person, Town or Country, whereby the Priests pretended to deliver them from hainous guilt or pollution, and from infesting evil spirits. These Lustratores orbium were called [Greek omitted] by the Athenians, and the whole way of purifying I suppose was called [Greek omitted] I mean that way which concerned the

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chasing away of evill spirits. But as for that way of sacred purifications, whereby the good Dæmons were conciliated, and their conversation procured, it was called [Greek omitted]. I confesse Saint Augustine makes this difference between Theurgia and Goelia, according to the opinion of the heathen Philosophers

in his time; that Theurgia was sacred and laudable, but Goelia wicked and mischievous. This you may read in his Tenth Book, De Civitate Dei, Chapter the Ninth. Whereat I cannot sufficiently wonder, for if it had been so in Plato's dayes, surely he would never have made Goelia to be one main part or imployment of the Priestly Office, as I shall have occasion to shew, when I come to consider the sixth Chapter. For my own part I suppose, that Goelia was no more wicked than Theurgia, but because it was employed about evill spirits, in processe of time it came

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to be taken in an evill sense, as if it had been an art of confederating with, or driving away those infesting Dæmons. These significations of [Greek omitted] and [Greek omitted], induce me to believe, that the two Hebrew words derived from [Hebrew omitted], onewhereof our Translators render Witch, and the other Witchcraft, may be thus expounded. By Witchcraft in Scripture is meant, any deceit full Art or imposture, to confirm men in idolatry, or to seduce them to it. By Witch for the most part chiefly is meant, that kind of Priest, whose calling or imployment it was to practise the Imposture of Lustration. The third fault, which I find in our Translation is, their mistaking a Consulter with Oracles, or false Prophets, for a Consulter with Familiar Spirits. And this I prove to be a fault, by that passage in the Chronicles, concerning

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Manasses, where it is said, That he made Pythons or Prophets. Fot if the Hebrew word [Hebrew omitted], signifies a Familiar Spirit, according to our Translation, then Manasses must be said to have made Spirits; for so the Hebrew word [Hebrew omitted] imports, and not to deal with them, as our Translators have it. For my part I do not believe, that the Devil can make any the least living creature, much lesse that a man as Manasses was, though a King, could make a Devil. The truth is, these familiar Spirits were no other than Pythons, and Pythons were no other than Heathen Prophets. For the Heathens did usually call those amongst them, who pretented unto the gift of Prophesie, by the name of Pythons; which is as much as to say, men that had the spirit of Apollo. The reason of which name was, because they took Apollo to be the God of Divination, as may be gathered

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from the words of Socrates, Plato's Phedrus, where he distinguisheth between two sorts of madness, one arising from

humane diseases, the other proceeding from the divine hand, altering one from his wonted disposition. This divine madness he again devides into four parts; Whereof one concerns love matters belonging to Venus and Cupid. Another Poetry, and this belongs to the Muses. A third part is of sacred mysteries, which Bacchus challengeth unto himself. And the fourth of Divinations, is under the Government of Apollo. Now Apollo being called Pythius [Greek omitted] according to Strabo; It was very proper to call those men and women, who never thought to have the divining spirit of Apollo, Pythons and Pythonisses, as being derived from that name which was given unto him, upon the account of Divination. Hence it is, that St. Luke

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speaking of a Wench, who pretended to prophesie, saith she had [Greek omitted] Wherein he accommodates himself to the vulgar mode of speech, used in his age. Not as if she had really the spirit of Apollo, who was but a fictitious deity, and consequently had no spirit of his own, wherewith to possesse the hearts of men. So that when Saint Luke saith, this spirit came out of the Damsel, he means, she forsook her cozening imposture, and returned to an honest disposition. Just as when the evil spirit left Saul, at the playing of David on his Harp; we are to understand thereby, that Saul returned to a cheerful disposition, and left off his melancholick dumps. Nor let any one think, that though Apollo was but a fictitious deity, there were reall devils acted his oracular part. I suppose Lysander the Lacedæmonean thought he had to do with humane creatures, when

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he attempted to bribe, first the Priestesse at Delphos, then her at Dodona, afterwards the Priests of Jupiter Hammon. Indeed Lysander was but a subject, and though he came with a purse in one hand, he did not come with a sword in the other; Otherwise he might have sped as well, as afterwards Philip of Macedon did with the Delphian Apollo, and his son Alexander the Great, with Jupiter Hammon. As for the observation, concerning the decay of Oracles at the coming of Christ, 'tis but a meer fancy. Nor do I at all value, any oracle or sentence that may be brought to that purpose, being well assured that they were but the forgeries of primitive Christians, whose blind intemperate zeal, did tempt them to forge not only sentences but whole Authours, as any that hath not read Histories himself, may find in Causabons Exercitations on Baronius, Blondel

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on the Sybils, as also the decree of Pope Gelasius, who amongst other counterfeit Authors doth prohibit counterfeit Prophets, counterfeit Gospels, and counterfeit acts of the Apostles. Besides I would fain know what some men mean by the ceasing of Oracles at the comeing of Christ. If they mean, that Oracles were then quite silent, 'tis false. For Plutarch testifies that in his time, which was after Christ, the Oracle at Delphos in Phocis, as also that at Lebadia, a Town in Bæotia, did still give answers. Again if they mean only that Oracles were much out of request at the coming of Christ. I answer so they were long before his coming, witnesseth a very good Author, Marcus Tullius Cicero, who died some years before Christ was born. Yer it appears by his second Book of Divination, that Oracles were so much gone to decay long before his time; that in

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his dayes there was nothing more contemptible. Cicero's words are these, Sed quod caput est, cur isto modo jam oracula Delphis non edantur, non modo nostra ætate, sed jam diu, adeo ut nikil posset esse contemptius? Thus I suppose, I have made good my objections against our English Translators, who without question in this particular matter, were swayed by the preiudice of a preæ-conceived opinion of Witches and Witchcraft. As also they apparently were in Translating the English Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; where they say one Simon used forcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, whereas in the Greek there is no such thing; he only made the people of Samaria to wonder at his works. But when Philip the Deacon came thither, he made Simon himself to wonder at his works. I don't say he did bewitch him. yet

Chapter 2

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if our Translators had been constant to their own interpretation, the words being of the same signification in the original, they must as well have made Simon bewitched by Philip, as the Samaritans by Simon. CHAP. II. That the Opinion of Witches hath had its foundation in Heathen Fables. Thus I have made it appear, how false Prophets and workers of counterfeit-Miracles, have been mistaken by our Translatours of the Bible for Witches and dealers with familiar Spirits; A mistake so gross, that it obscures many things in the Law of Moses, as also in the Prophets,

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where there are several places directly intended against the Heathen religion, especially that of the Egyptians. Now such was the vain credulity of men, that they did not only believe these things were real which the Priests did counterfeit, but they also ascribed unto private persons a power equal unto that of the Priests, or rather beyond it. For not only men, but women also, especially old women have been famous for Prophesying of things to come, whence they were called Sagæ, as also for wonderful and miraculous exploits, whence they were called Lamiæ or Veneficæ. They were called Lamiæ chiefly from their exploits upon little Children. For it seems according to the Fable, there was one Lamia a beautiful woman in Lybia, whom Jupiter fell in love with, but jealous Jnuo took her children which she had by Jupiter and killed them,

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wherefore she out of meer spite being grieved at the killing of her own children, did use to kill the children of other women. They were called Veneficæ, because they were wont to make use of herbs, which they supposed had strange kind of vertues in them; for with herbs or Charms they alwayes acted. Num te carminibus, num te pallentibus herbis, Devovit tacito tempore noctis anus? Strange it is to consider, how far the folly of men hath proceeded in their belief, concerning the actions both of male and female Witches: As if sorsooth they could transform men and women into beasts, as if they could destroy the fruits of the earth, and the fruit of the womb, at their pleasure, as if they could raise winds and tempests, or allay them, enable or disable in matters veneral, In a word, as if they could enslave nature

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her self, and make the Universe obey their commands. Examples of this prodigious power, are scattered up and down the Roman Poets, I shall quote some few of them out of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, Propertius, Lucan. Has herbas, atq; hæc ponto mibi lecta venena, Ipse dedit Mæris, nascuntur plurima ponto. G1 His ego sæpe lupum fieri and se condere sylvis Mærim, sæpe animas imis excire sepulebris, Atq; sat as alio vidi traducere messes. Quos hominum exfacie, Dea sævapotentibus (herbis Indurat Circe, in vnltus ac terga ferarnm. G2 Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat (agnos Quæ movere cereas imagines, Vt ipse nosti curiosus; and polo Deripere lunam vocibus possum meis, Possum crematos excitare mortuos, Desideriq; temper are poculum. G3 - notes- G1Virg. Eclo. 8. G2Virg. l.lib 6. Æneid. G3Horat. ode ult.

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Illa reluctantem cursu deducere lunam Nititur and tenebris
abdere solis equos. G1 Illa refrænat aquas, obliquaq; fulmina
sistit, Illa loco Sylvas vivaq; saxsa movet: Per tumulos errat,
sparsis distincta capillis, Certaq; de tepidis colligit ossa rogis:
Devovet absentes, simulachraq; cerea figit, Et miserum tenues in
jecur urget acus. G2----- Concussaq; sisto,
Stantia concutio cantu freta, nubila pello, Nubilaq, induco, ventos
abigoq, vocoq; G3Num mea Thessalico languent devota venene
Corpora num misero carmen and herbs nocent Sagave punicea
defixit nomina cer â Et medium tenues in jecvr urget acus
Carmiue læsa ceres sterilem vanescit in herbam Deficiunt læsi
Carmine fontis aquæ; Ilicibus glandes cantataq; vitibus uva,
Decidit and nullo poma movente fluunt; Quid vetat and nervos
magicas torpere per (artes, Forsitan impatiens fit latus inde
meum: G4Cum libet hæc tristi depellit nubila c lo, Cum libet
æstivo provoe at or be nives, -notes- G1Ovid Epis. Hypsip.
G2Ovid. lib. 7. Metamor. G3Ovid 3. Amor Eleg. 6. G4Tibul. lib. 1.
Eleg. 2.

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Quid credam? G1 Hæc eadem nostros se dixit (amores, Cantibus
aut berbis solvere posse meos Invidiæ fuimus? num nos Deus
obruit? G2 an (quæ Lecta Promethæis dividit herba jugis?
Cessavere vires rerum, dilataq; longa, Hæsit nocte dies, legi non
paruit Æther; Torpuit and præceps audito carmine mundus,
Axibus and rapidis impulsos Jupiter urgens Miratur non ire polos,
Tunc omnia complent Imbribus, and calidoproducunt nubila
Phæbo Et tonat ignaro C lum Jove. G3 These, and many more
instances of the like kind might be produced out of the Heathen
Poets, sufficient to testisie the folly of the vulgar Heathens, in
their belief concerning the Power of Witches. As for the Opinions
concerning Incubi and Succubi Devils, I suppose it had its rise
from the Fable of the antient Heroes, who (as Socrates in Plato's
Cratylus doth affirm) were begotten from the -notes- G1Tibul.
lib. 1, Eleg.8. G2Propert. lib. 1. Eleg 12. G3Lucan. lib. 6.

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Coniunction of Deities with Humane Creatures; which kind of
Conjunction, whosoever believes, his Opinion is base and sottish,
and fit only to be a cloak for the Adulteries of the Heathen
Priests, who often did lye with other mens Wives, pretending that
the Gods had vouchsafed them the Honour of their Company.
Very remarkable to this purpose, is the story of Tyrannus a Priest
of Saturn, who under this pretence made use of many a mans

Wife, till at last, one more wise than the rest discovered the cheat. In like manner Mundus a Gentleman of Rome, by the help of the Priests belonging to the Temple of Isis, enjoyed his pleasure on Paulina a Roman Lady, who mistook him for the God Anubis. Nevertheless, let no one think, that the ingenious Poets did themselves, or any other of the wiser sort of Heathens, believe such ridiculous

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and absurd fopperies; for on the contrary, when they speak their own minds, and not according to the Fable or Vulgar opinion, they laugh these absurdities to scorn: Thus Propertius derides them. G1At vos deductæ quibus est fallacia lunæ, Et labor in magicis sacra piare focus; Enagedum dominæ mentem convertite nostræ Et facite illa meo palleat ore magis: Tunc ego crediderim vobis, and sydera and amnes Posse Cytæmis ducere carminibus Ovid also it of the same mind, and gives no credit to these Cheats. G2Nec vos graminibus nec misto credite succo, Nec tentate nocens virus amantis equæ: Nec mediæmarsis finduntur cantibus angues Nec redit in fontes unda supina suos: Et quamvis aliquis Temes a removerit æra Nunquam Lunasuis excutietur equis. -notes- G1propert. lib. 1. Eleg. G2Ovid de mediam sacrei

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Fallitur æmonias si quis decurrit ad artes, Datq; quod a teneri fronte revellit equi: Non facient ut vivat amor Medeides herbæ, Mixtaq; cum magicis mersa venena sonis. G1 Quid te Phasiacæ juverunt gramina terr, Cum cuperes patria Colehi manere domo? G2 Quid tibiprofuerint Circe Perseides herbæ, Cum tibi Neritias abstulit aura rates? (arte, Ergo quisquis opem nostra tibi poscis ab Deme venesiciis carminibusq; fidem. G3 But Horace excellently, and like himself, lays it down as a mark or sign of ones proficiency in moral Phylosophy, if he had learnt to despise and laugh at these kind of Fables. Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas. G4 Nocturnos lemures potentiaq; Thessala rides? In like manner Seneca reproving the credulous simplicity of elder times, shews what Opinion he himself was of: His words are these, Et -notes- G1Ovid lib. 2.de Arte Amandi. G2Ovid lib: deRemed. Amor. G3Ibid. G4Hor. Epist. ult.

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apud nos in lege duodecim Tabularum cavetur, ne quis alienas fruges excantassit; Rudis adhuc antiquitas credebat, and attrahi imbræ cantibus and repelli, quorum nihil posse fieri tam palam

est, ut ejus rei causa nullius Philosophi Schola intranda sit. G1 In a word, I might here instance in other of the Antients, as in Hypocrates and Lucian, the one deriding the other, seriously disputing against Magick cheats: But I shall conclude with the judgement of Nero the Emperour, who had wit enough, who had Men, Books, Money, I had almost said, the World at his command, so that he could want no helps for the promoting his desires. This Nero ambitious of being Chief in every thing, especially desiring to Command the Gods as well as men, did in order thereunto eagerly apply himself to the study of Magick, which after his utmost endeavours, he forsook and despised, finding it -notes- G1Sen. lib. 4. Nat-Quæst.

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to be vain, and to promise that which it cannot perform. Chap. II. Considered. The notion of a Witch, as it is taken now adayes being not to be found in Scripture; I thought it worth the while to discover, where it might be found in ancient times. For which purpose, I could not insist on a more illustrious way, than by producing the Testimonies of ancient Poets, who usually allude unto the vulgar opinion of their present ages, not caring whether they be true or false, provided they serve for the adorning of their Poems. Wherefore I cannot chuse but laugh at the weakness of that objection which hath been often made against me. Why I should quote fabulous Poets. But I pray wherein

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are they fabulous, not in that which I have quoted them for, namely to shew that the people of those times did commonly believe Witches could do such and such wonderfull things. Indeed, that those who were reputed Witches could do so is a meer fable, but that the people believed they could, is a reall truth. Now this foolish belief hath been transmitted from Father to Son through all ages, down unto our present time, and is deep rooted in the hearts of the Vulgar. For it is remarkable, that the self same thing which the antient Poets affirm, concerning Witches, the women of our time do tell to children. If Mæris, Mædea, Canidia, Circe, and others of old, could transform themselves and raise the dead; 'tis no more than what we are told almost as soon as we are born that men and women can do now But some will object and say, they do not believe that Witches can do

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such things as these: and I shall as often tell them, I don't care for a Witch of their making. Yet these men forsooth, in their metaphysical definitions, will allow a Witch to be able to raise winds and showre down rain, and to blast the fruits of the earth. Indeed it were rational to believe that Witches or Devils for them, could blast the fruits of the earth, and blite the Corn, if so be they could alter the weather. But on the contrary the wind bloweth where it listeth, and hath it's natural course, if we may believe Solomon the King and Preacher. Nor can all the vanities of the Gentiles (whether Idol or Devil) cause the Heavens to rain, if we may believe the Prophet Jeremiah. His words do thus elegantly expostulate; Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? Or can the Heavens give showres?

Art

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not thou he O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait upon thee, for thou hast made all these things. 'Tis true indeed, Thomas Aquinas in his Comment on Job, doth distinguish at this place of Jeremiah, and saith that the Devil cannot cause rain in a natural course, but he can in an artificial way. By which distinction, he doth quite evacuate the force of the Prophets expostulation. But what will not men of distinctions do, if you allow them their full swinge of distinguishing, they'l make any thing signifie any thing. Neverthelesse, though we let Thomas Aquinas and his distinction pass, the assertors of Witchcraft must not scape so. For I would fain know by what art the Devil can raise a tempest, as soon as ever such or such a person shall enter into a Ship. Or how comes it to pass, that when an old woman on the top of a tree, shall mumble a few words, immediately

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the winds must rise. Surely this instantaneous motion, is beyond the power of a Devil to produce, nor doth nature obey him so far. If you obiect, who amongst men is able to tell what a spirit can do? I answer; 'tis hard indeed to tell what a Spirit can do, but 'tis easie to tell what a Spirit created can not do. I confesse indeed, the Devill is called the Prince of the air, not as if he could command that Element, but rather the spirits which inhabit there. As for the History of Job, the Devils power can not be argued from thence. The Author of that Book, having been pleased to handle his subject, after the manner of Poets, who deliver many things, partly for delight, and partly for explication. But before I leave this consideration, I shall put the Reader in mind to consider, that the Poets themselves laughing at the pretended

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power of Witches, which they so much magnifie in their Poems, did look upon it as a meer fable, fit only to adorn their writings by way of allusion. And that not the Poets only, but the wisest of men in all ages, have laugh at this Fable. Pliny in his natural History doth confess, that 'twas of old a famous and much celebrated question, whether words and charms did avail or no? The Affirmative he makes to be the common opinion, but the Negative the wiser; His words are these; Sed viritim Sapientissimi cujusq; respuit fides.

Chapter 3

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CHAP. III. That it hath been proved by the Papal Inquisitors, seeking their ownprivate gain, as also to establish the usurped Dominion of their Founder. Now one would think, that these kind of Heathenish Fables and Follies, although they took root in the minds of the Christian vulgar, should never have been assented unto by those who account themselves Rabbies and Doctors of the people; yet I'le assure ye, there is hardly any thing which I have quoted out of the Poets, that hath not been declared true, by the Inquisition and by the Canon Law: As any

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one may see, who will take the pains to consult several Popish writings; such as the Bull of Pope Innocent the Eighth, directed to the Inquisitors of Almaine, the Malleus Maleficarum of Jacobus Spreuerus, the Formicarium of Johannes Niderus, as also Bartholomæus Spineus de strigibus, Paulus Grillandus de Sortilegiis, and (to mention no more) Martin Delrio the Jesuit's Disquisitiones Magicæ, who hath written largely upon this subject. Nor have they been content to assert the Fables of the Heathens only without the addition of many more of their own; for they confidently assert, that Witches make a Contract with the Devil, wherein they renounce their Baptism, and Christian Faith; as also they engage to slight and to despise the Virgin Mary, to trample upon the sign of the Cross, Images and Reliques of Saints, Holy water, Salt, Wax-Candles,

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and other things Hallowed by the Church; to undervalue the seven Sacraments, and particularly not to Adore the Consecrated Host. They also engage to be ready at all times to make their

appearance at the solemn Conventicles of Witches, where they dance and feast, and adore the Devil who is present amongst them. Which mad kind of revelling, without doubt, as Cardan hath well observed, is grounded upon the ancient Heathen Orgia. To these Conventicles, the Witches are said to come from far distant Countries, being carried through the Air, for which strange passage, they prepare their bodies with I know not what kind of oyntment; but I suppose it is made of the same ingredients, as that was, which turned Lucian into an Ass. Nor must ye doubt the Truth of these things, which the Holy Inquisition hath in several Countries at several Tryals of

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Witches found to be true, as well from the testimony of Witnesses, as also from the self Confession of Delinquents. But because the Inquisitors of Heretical Pravity (for so they are styled) have been pleased to vent these things into the world; It may not be amiss, nor besides our present purpose, to enquire into the Inquisitors themselves. The first time that I can hear News of them in History, is in the dayes of Maximus, who contended with Theodosius for the Empire: Though I confess an Inquisition was then but intended, not brought to effect. This Maximus was the first who put Hereticks to death, namely Priscilian and his Partners; by the perswasion of one Ithacius, and if it had not been for St. Martin, he would have sent Tribunes into Spain, with power to enquire or search for Hereticks, and to take away their lives and goods. In process

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of time, Charlemain, who was Crowned Emperour in the Eight hundredth year after Christ, did by his Laws or Capitulars, declare the Bishop of Rome to be Head of the Church. These Laws were therefore called Capitulars, because they were little Heads or Chapters extracted out of the Ancient Fathers and Councils: Nevertheless all those Capitulars which concerned the Roman Supremacy, were extracted out of counterfeit Authors, that cheat being put upon him by the Bishops of Mentz. About three hundred years afterwards, in the year One thousand one hundred twenty two, the Emperour Henry the fifth, was forced to resign his Power of Electing and Investing Bishops with the Staff and Ring into the hands of the Church; of which the Roman Bishop, being the publickly acknowledged and declared Head, did by this means obtain a greater Empire

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and power, then ever the Roman Cæsars had. This being perceived by the Germane Emperours, there was almost perpetual contention and war between them and the Bishops of Rome: But especially Frederick the second, who flourisht in the beginning of the thirteenth Century, spent most of his Reign, and his utmost Endeavours, to take down the Church from overtopping the Empire. Nevertheless it was in his Reign, that the Roman Bishops did notably provide, for the security of their exorbitant power; Then it was, that Frederick the Second, when he was at Padua, made those unhappy Laws, whereby Hereticks were lyable to the punishment of death, of which Laws the Popes made very great advantage. Then it was that Gregory the ninth advanced the Authority of Canon or Pontifical Laws, by composing the Decretals with the

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help of his Chaplain Raymund. Lastly, then it was, that the Orders of Dominican and Franciscan Fryers were founded, to whom was committed the Inquisition after Hereticks. Now these Monks at their first setting up for Inquisitors, as Father Paul hath observed, in his History of the Inquisition, had no Tribunal or Court of their own, but did only preach, and stir up Princes and People, engaging them into Crusadoes against Hereticks, by sewing a piece of red cloth in the form of a Cross upon their Garments: But Innocent the fourth, who began his Pontificate about the latter end of Frederick the second, observing the notable zeal of these Fryars, thought good to erect a Tribunal for them, that so they themselves might proceed to the Tryal of Hereticks. To bring this about, he had a fair opportunity upon the death of Frederick

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by reason of the vacancy that then happened in the Empire many years. For now having no Emperour to controul him in Italy, he took the confidence to impose the Inquisition upon three several Provinces, (viz.) Lombardia, Romaniela and Marchia Tervesina. There are extant several Bulls, written by Innocent the fourth unto the Magistrates of those Countries: One where he sets down the forementioned Laws of Frederick against Hereticks word for word, and commands them to be strictly observed: Nor can I blame him, for holding his Ecclesiastical Empire upon no other Title then the pretence of Religion; to be a Heretick must needs be the same thing to him, and his Successours, as to be a Traytor is to Temporal Princes. There is another Bull of his, wherein he enjoynes the Magistrates of the aforesaid Countries, to observe several Articles

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or Constitutions relating to the Inquisition; In which Articles, amongst other things, he ordains, that the Inquisitors shall have their Charges defrayed out of the goods of persons condemned; and this way of satisfying the Inquisitors, he ordains in another peculiar Bull for that purpose. Hence it came to pass, that when the Inquisition had gotten foot in many Kingdomes and Countries, an incredible number of people were frequently tormented and burnt for the Crime of Witchcraft; which they had so entwisted with Heresie, or the denial of Pontifical Authority, that in seeking out Witches, in tormenting and putting them to death, they did at once gratifie, as well the ambition and usurped Power of their Lord the Pope, as their own insatiable covetousness, and thirst after other mens goods. In the year One thousand five hundred and eighteen, the Inquisitors

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put to death a great many Inchanters, which they had found out forsooth in the Venetian Territories: where such was the Extortion and Covetousness in their proceedings, that the Country rose up against them, and the Council after at Venice was fain to send for these Inquisitors to enquire into their proceedings; yet do what they could, the enraged people were hardly to be appeased. In the same year, I suppose it was, that upon the like occasion of the Countries Rising against an Inquisitor, and carrying him to the Bishop, Alciat a famous Civil-Lawyer gave his ingenious answer to the Bishop, who askt his advice herein, as may be seen in Alciats Parerga, where he handsomly deseribes the vain and monstrous credulity of some Divines in this question of Witchcraft. Nicolaus Remingius a Lorrain Judge, doth confess, that in the time of his Judicature, in the

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space of sixteen years, there was about eight hundred Witches put to death, besides as many more that escaped, either by timely running a way, or by a constant enduring of torture. In a word, after the founding of the Dominican and Franciscan Fryars, and the setting up an Office of Inquisition, the world grew so full of Devils and Witches, that I am prone to assent unto the judgement of Cardan, who handling this business of Witches and Witchfinders, observed it to be full of Covetousness and folly, as any one may read in his Book, De Varietate Rerum.

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Chap. III. Considered. How grossly the opinion of Witchcraft, hath been made to serve the corrupt ends and interests of men, appears from nothing more, than from the strange examinations of Inquisitors. So strange that 'tis to me a wonder, if the Inquisitors can hold their countenances, and forbear from laughing at one another. This I am sure of, that (as Episcopus hath well observed) the confessions which they have extorted from some, do savour of the Pontifical rack, and seem to have been dictated unto these miserable wretches, by the very Inquisitors themselves; with a design to advance the reputation of the Virgin Mary, and the Sacraments of their own Church. Nay, so far did they proceed in this matter, that Heresie

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was a sign of Witchcraft; Insomuch that any one who did not assent to the Roman Church, might have been upon this very question, in danger of the Inquisition. To this purpose Del-Rio the Jesuite, in the Prologue to his Magical Disquisitions doth look upon Lutheranism and Calvinism, as two great fountains of Witchcraft. But yet as the Inquisitors did with one eye respect the advancement of their publique Church, so with the other they had a regard to their private Profit. For which their way was prepared by those constitutions of the Roman Bishops which ordered them to have their charges defrayed out of the goods of persons condemned: For ye need not doubt but they would pay themselves well. Nicholaus Eymericus in his Directory of the Inquisition, Part the third, Question the hundred and Eighth, doth enquire which way the Inquisitors and their

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Officers, should be provided for as to their charges or expences. And there he saith some were of opinion that the Bishop of the place should provide for them. Others again thought it behoved the temporal Princes. But a third sort there were, who thought fit to provide for them out of the goods of persons condemned. Now this way though Eymericus approves as just, yet he doth not like it as being somewhat scandalous to the Office, and therefore he wisheth for any other way rather. Nevertheless Innocent the fourth, did not only like this way, but command it also by his Apostolique Letter directed to the Bishops of Lombardy and other Italian Countries, which begins thus, Cum per nostras, and c. as Franciscus Pegna doth record in his Comment on the Directory of Eymericus. This Letter was written in the year one thousand two hundred fifty two

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peculiarly for the maintenance of Inquisitors out of goods confiscated, as containing nothing else in it. But in the preceeding year, the same Pope had directed his Apostolique Letter, unto the Magistrates of the same Countries, beginning thus, Ad extirpanda demedio, and c. wherein amongst other things he ordains, how the goods of condemned persons should be distributed; Namely one part, to the common Treasure or Stock of the City or place; another part to the Officers, who were employed in the business: And a third part to be laid up in a safe place, and to be afterwards expended according as the Bishop and the Inquisitors should think fit. You may read these constitutions in that collection which the aforesaid Franciscus Pegna made, of the Letters which were written concerning the Office of Inquisition, by sundry Popes, for at least three hundred

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and seventy years; that is, from about the year one thousand two hundred, or the beginning of Innocent the third, till about the year one thousand five hundred and seventy, or the latter end of Pius the Fifth. These things could never have been done, had not the Bishops of Rome by various methods and sundry policies, raised themselves from an Episcopal Chair, to a regal and an Emperial Throne. Now because the reader may plainly see, what work these Inquisitors made when they had once gotten power into their hands, I shall here set down word for word, the sentence of the Inquisition at Avignon, whereby they delivered several persons, into the hands of the secular Magistrate, to be punisht for the Crime of Witchcraft. Visis processibus coram N.N.N. and c. contra nobis constitutos reos, accusatos, and delatos: quibus tamper vestram,

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and quorumlibet vestrum relationem, ac propriam confessionem judicialiter coram nobis fact am, atque sæpius repetitam juramento vestro medio: quam per testium depositiones, eorumque accusationes, and alias legitimas probationes, ex dict is, act is and processu resultantes, nobis legitime constistit, and constat, quod vos, and vestrum quilibet, Deum nostrum omnium Creatorem and Opificem, Vnum and Trinum abnegast is: and immitem Diabolum, hostem antiquum humani generis coluist is, vosque illi perpetuo devovist is: and sacratissimo Baptismati, and his qui in eo fuerant susceptores levantes, and proparentes, vestrique Patres paradisi, and æternæ hæreditat is, quam pro vobis and toto genere humano Dominus noster Jesus Christus sua morte acquisivit, coram præfato Cacodæmone, in humana

specie existente, abrenunciasti: infundente ipso rugiente
Diabolo denuo aquam, quam accepisti, vestro vero mutate

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nomine in sacro Baptismatis fonte vobis imposito, sicque aliud
commenticum nomen vobis imponi fictitio baptismate
passifueristi, and accepisti: at que in pignus fidei Dæmoni datæ
vestimentorum vestrorum fragmentum and particulam illi
dedistis: and ut a libro vitæ vos deleri and oblitterari pater
mendacij curaret, signa vestra propria manu, ipso mandante et
jubente, in reproborum damnatorum, mortisque perpetuæ libro
nigerrimo ad hoc parato apposuisti: and ut ad tantam persidiam
and impietatem vos majori vinculo devinciret, notam vel stigma
cuilibet vestrum, veluti rei suæ propriæ inussit: and illius
mandatis and jussis jurejurando, super circulo (quod Divinitatis
symbolum est) in terram sculpto (quæ scabellum pedum Deiest)
pervos and quemlibet vestrum præstito, vos obstrinxisti signo
Dominico and cruce conculcato: and illi parendo, adminiculo
baculi, quodam nefandissimo unguento ab ipso Diabolo vobis

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Præscripto illiti, cruribus and positiper aera ad locum
constitutum, intempesta nocte, hora commoda malefactoribus,
statisque diebus ab ipso tentatore portati and translati fuisti:
ibique in communi synagoga plurimorum malesicorum
sortilegorum, and hæreticorum fasciniorum, cultorumque
Dæmonum, accenso igne tetro, post multas jubilationes,
saltationes, comessationes, compotationes and ludos, in
honorem ipsius Præsidentis Beelzebub Principis Dæmoniorum, in
formam and speciem fædissimi and nigerrimi hirci immutati. ut
Deum, re and verbis adorasti; and adillum complicat is genibus
suplices accessisti, and candelas piceas accensas obtulisti,
and illius fætidissimum ac turpissimum anum (proh pudor:)
summa cum reverentia ore sacrilego deosculati estis: illumque
sub veri Dei nomine invocasti: illiusque auxilium, and pro
vindicta in omnes, vobis vel infenos, vel petita denegantes,
exercenda efflagitasti:

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at que ab ipso edoctivindictas, maleficia, fascinations tum in
humanas creaturas, tum etiam in animalia exercuisti, at que
homicidia infantium quamplurima commisisti, imprecations,
ablactationes, tabes and alios gravissimos morbos; opejam dicti
Satanæ, immisisti, infantesque per vos, nonnullis etiam
scientibus tantum and annuentibus, arte jam dicta malesica

oppressos, confosso and interfectos fuisse, ac demum in c
miterio sepultos noctu and clam exhumastis, at que in
synagogum prædictam, facinorum collegium portastis:
denique Dæmoniorum Principi in solio sedenti, obtulitis,
detracta and vobis conservata pinguedine, capite manibus and
pedibus abscissis, truncumque decoqui and elixari, and interdum
assari curastis, jubenteque ac mandante præfato Patre vestro
comedistis, and damnabiliter devorastis: mala denique malis
addendo, vos viri cum succubis, vos mulieres cum incubis
fornicati estis, Sodomiam

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veram and nefandissimum crimen misere cum illis tactu
frigidissimo exercuistis: and , quod etiam detest abilissimum est,
augustissimum Eucharistiæ Sacramentum per vos in Ecclesia
sanct a Dei aliquando sumptum, jam dicti Serpentis a Paradiso
ejecti præcepto, in ore retinuistis, illudque in terram nefarie
expuistis, ut cum majori omnis contumeliæ, impictatis and
contemptus specie Deum nostrum verum and sanctum
dehonestaretis, ipsum vero Diabolum, ejusque gloriam,
honorem, triumphum and regnum promoveritis, at que omni
honore, laudibus, dignitate, auctoritate et adoratione
honoraretis, decoraretis et honestaretis. Quæ omnia gravissima,
horrendissima ac nefandissima sunt, directe in Omnipotentis Dei
omnium Creatoris contumeliam and injuriam. Quam ob causam
nos F. Florus Provincialis Ordinis Fratrum Prædicatorum, Sacræ
Theologiæ Doctor, ac Sanctæ Fidei in tota ista Legatione

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Avinionensi Inquisitor Generalis: Dei timorem præ oculis
habentes, pro tribunali sedentes, per hanc nostram sententiam
diffinitivam, quam, de Theologorum and Jurisperitorum consilio,
more majorum, in his ferimus scriptis, Jesu Christi Domininostri,
ac B. Mariæ Virginis nominibus pie invocatis dicimus,
declaramus, pronunciamus, et diffinitive sententiamus: Vos
omnes supra nominatos, et vestrum quemlibet fuisse and esse
veros Apostatas, Idololatras, Sanctissimæ Fidei desertores, Dei
Omnipotentis abnegatores and contemptores, Sodomitos, et
nefandissimi criminis reos, adulteros, fornicatores, sortilegos,
maleficos, sacrilegos, hæreticos, fascinarios, homicidas,
infanticidas, Dæmonumque cultores, Satanicæ diabolicæ at que
infernalis disciplinæ, and damnabilis ac reprobatae fidei
assertores, blasphemos, perjuros, infames, and omnium
malorum, facinorum and delictorum convictos fuisse. Ideo vos
omnes, vestrumque

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quemlibet, tanquam Satanæ membra, hac nostra sententia, Curiæ seculari remittimus, realiter et in effectu condignis et legitimis p nis eorum peculari judicio plectendos. Now others may think what they please of this Sentence, but for my own part when I Consider with my self, the ridiculousness of those things which were laid to the charge of these miserable wretches; I would not have been in the place of the Inquisitor general, and have passed the same sentence, for ten thousand Millions of Gold.

Chapter 4

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CHAP. IV. Arguments to prove, that there is no such thing as a Witch in Scripture; and Arguments to prove that there is no such thing as a Witch at all. By this time methinks It plainly appears, out of the preceeding Discourse, that the notion of a Witch, as it is taken now adayes, hath no foundation at all in Scripture; but had its Original, or first Rise, out of the Heathenish Fables, and was afterwards improved by Papal impostures. Nevertheless, to give further satisfaction, I shall produce some arguments to prove, first, That a Witch is not to be found in Scripture: Secondly, That there is

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no such thing as a Witch at all. The first Argument shall be taken from the difference, between our vulgarly reputed Witches, and those which our Translatours of the Bible call so; for whom I pray do our Translatours call Witches, but the Kings and Queens and Princes of the Earth, as also the Priests and Philosophers and wise men of this world? Whereas the Witches now adayes are poor, silly, contemptible people; for instead of such as King Manasses, and Queen Jesebel, we now hear talk of this old Gammer and that old Goodwife. It seems the Kingdom of darkness is quite altered in its Politicks, and the Devil is not so wise as some men make him, if this Opinion of Witchcraft be true. The second Argument shall be taken from the Sadduces, a famous Sect amongst the Jews, who denied Spirits, and the Resurrection of the

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dead; yet had the five Books of Moses in high esteem and regard: Wherefore either they did not understand Hebrew, or if

they did, the notion of Witchcraft doth not appear in Moses: And if this be once granted, I suppose the other parts of the Bible will easily follow: But perhaps you'l object and say, that the Sadduces were a Sect after the Captivity, which kept the Jews so long in Babylon that they forgot their own Tongue; and that the Jews after their return into Judea, spake not the Hebrew but the vulgar Syrian. To this I answer, That when the Sect of the Sadduces took its beginning is uncertain, and that however the Common People did forget the Old Hebrew, yet the Priests did alwayes preserve its knowledge. Now that Priests themselves were Sadduces is manifest, for even the High Priest Joseph Hyreanus was one of that Sect, as Josephus testifies.

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The third and last Argument shall be taken from the different practises ascribed unto our vulgarly supposed Witches, and unto those in our Translation of the Bible: For our modern Witches practise a secret occult Art, and 'tis a great Art to discover them by several strange signs and horrid tortures: But those whom our Translators call Witches in the Bible, were such as practised what they did openly, and in the face of the world, making publick profession of their Art, which was, as I have already made it appear, the Counterfeit Art of Prophesying and working Miracles. But alas! had it been this mysterious Art of contracting with the Devil, and of using his power, the Professors whereof are so clandestine in their wayes, that they can hardly be discovered by various scrutinies and inquiries; how impossible a thing had it been, for Saul to turn them all out of Israel,

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as we read he did, 1 Sam.28. This I am sure of, a Proclamation now adayes set out to that purpose, would avail nothing, and only serve to move the laughter of those who stood by to hear it. If then there be no such thing as a Witch in Scripture, I shall make use of that as the first argument, to prove that there is no such thing as a Witch at all. Nor let any one that abounds with words, and his own sense; immediately cry out; then there is no such River as Thames, there is no such Country as America, if silence in Scripture serves for an argument. A man may make such instances from morning to night, and make a great noise to no purpose; as if there were no difference between those things which lye quite besides the scope of the Scriptures notice, and those things which if they be true, the Scriptures could not be silent o', without the charge

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of imperfection. Let any one but read the Law of Moses, and then seriously consider, why it should be so severe against incestuous and bestial Concubinage, and yet not so much as mention diabolical. The Jews were forbid to meddle with strange women of other Nations, and should there be no caution given against their meddling with strange creatures, as it were of another world? Mark how curious the Law is in matters of uncleanness, and shall an ordinary running Issue be so much talkt of, and no mention made of Teats running with blood and suckt by Devils? Lastly, that Law which by its years of Jubilee, and several other Constitutions, provided more against oppression and cruelty then any other Law in the world; That Law which so detested the murther of men, that it made them merciful to their neighbours beasts; (I say that Law) could never pass over

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in silence, the cruel and abominable actions of Witches against both man and beast. Without question, it would have inflicted upon them the severest punishments; and for the discovery of their secret and devilish contracts, it would have laid down sufficient marks for tryal; especially since in a far less matter of adultery, it made use of that horrible and amazing tryal, by the bitter water which caused the Curse. Secondly, I argue from the miserable poverty of our vulgarly reputed Witches, that they are wrongfully accused: For I am not willing to believe, that they have such a power with the Devil, as to make him do wonderful things at their command, when they never command him to fetch them money, and to fetch them bread; indeed in the night time he carries them I know not whither, and there they meet with great variety of imaginary

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mirth and feasting. Now such as their Feast is, so is their Witchcraft, not real, but imaginary, as only existing in the foolish fancies of men. In the third place, I charge those who obstinately maintain there are Witches, either with irrationality or impiety; For 'tis irrational to think, that the Devils are Creatures full of malice, and breathing nought but mischief against the whole Race of man, and that they suffer a man to live, when they can so easily kill us at the command of a Witch. But if you evade this, by saying, that Devils cannot hurt us without Gods permission; then I say 'tis impious to concern the Great God with Witchcraft. 'Tis true indeed, he may send Death and Diseases amongst the Sons of men, to punish them for their sins at his own pleasure; but that he should do so, at the desire of the Devil, upon the

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command of a Witch, is such a gratification of malice, as is far from God to perform. Calvin in his Sermons on the two first Chapters of Job, takes a great deal of pains to explode this Opinion of Gods permission, and shews by several examples of Absolom, Ahab, and Nebuchadnezzar, that God doth not barely permit, but orders and determines the actions of Devils and wicked men; affirming that if Asses could speak, they would speak wiser then those men, who talk of Gods permitting: Nor will he grant, that God afflicted Job upon Satans request, but because he himself had so determined to try Jobs Patience. Lastly, the vanity and falsness of their Opinion, who believe there are Witches, appears from nothing more then from this, that it ascribes unto the Devil an Omnipotent Power: Insomuch, that no rational man by

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the light of reason, shall be able to tell from the History of the Gospel, whether Christ were a Witch or no; for let some men think what they please, the Holiness of his Doctrine is not the thousandth part such a proof of his acting by a Divine Power, as the miraculousness of his works. But alas! what were his Miracles, or how were they to be valued, if malicious Creatures, without a Divine Commission enabling them thereto, can make Frogs and Serpents, raise the dead, give Law unto the winds and Seas; to mention no more of those prodigious works ascribed unto Devils upon the account of Witchcraft? For my part, I believe that Devils are aerial creatures; and though they may have more skill, agility and strength, then men, yet that they act as men do, by applying of natural agents and patients to one another in this sublunary world: But as for the world

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Ætherial and Cælestial, I suppose they have no power there; consequently, that in spight of them, the wind bloweth where it listeth, and that the seasons of the year, as also the fruits of the earth, are neither promoted nor hindred by them, but immediately depend upon the motions and mutual aspects of the glorious Cælestial Stars, that are no way obnoxious to diabolical powers. They who think otherwise, let them consider how near they approach unto the Opinion of the Persians, who held there were two great Beings, both Almighty, both at mutual and perpetual war; one, the Author of all good, the other, of all evil: The good Principle they called Oromasdes, and the evil one Arimanus. Of the same Opinion were the Egyptians, as appears

by Osiris and Typhon; from them Pythagor as conveighed it to Greece. In a word, the whole Heathen world seems to

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have been infected with this conceit, believing infernal as well as supernal Gods; and therefore they had sacrifices, as well to appease the anger, and to avert the mischiefs of the one, as to propitiate and procure the blessings of the other. Nor can those Christians be excused from the same infection, who upon the account of Witchcraft, attribute omnipotency to the Devil; for what less do they believe, concerning the Prince of the Devils, and of his power? If according to them, he can command the influence of the Sun, and govern the motion of the Stars; if he can open the bowels of the earth, and cause the vapours to ascend in clouds into the middle Region of the Air, and thence again descend upon the earth, in thunder and lightning, and violent storms; if he can transform men and women into Cats, and if he can Frogs and Serpents create.

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Wherefore I conclude, it was a very seasonable decree, made by the Council of Ancyra, more ancient then the Nicene Council; wherein they declare unto all Christians, the Heathenishness of this belief and opinion: Their words are these; *Illud etiam non est omittendum, quod quædam sceleratæ mulieres retro post Satanum conversæ, dæmonum illusionibus and phantasmatibus seductæ, credunt and profitentur, se nocturnis horis, cum Diana Paganorum Dea, vel cum Herodiade, and innumera multitudine mulierum, equitare super quasdam bestias, and multa terrarum spatia intempestæ noctis spatio pertransire, ejusque jussionibus velut Dominæ obedire, and certis noctibus adejus servitium evocari: Sed utinam hæ solæ in sua perfidia periissent, and non multos secum in infidelitatis interitum pertraxissent: Nam innumer a multitudo hac falsa opinione decepta, hæc vera esse credit, and credendo a rect a fide*

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deviat, and in errore Paganorum revolvitur, cum aliquid divinitatis aut numinis extra unum Deum arbitratur. Quapropter sacerdotes per Ecclesias sibi commissas, populo omni instantia prædicare debent, ut neverint hæc omnimodis esse falsa, and non a Divino sed a maligno spiritu talia phantasmata, mentibus fidelium irrogari. Siquidem ipse Satanas qui transfigurat se in Angelum lucis, cum mentem cujusque mulierculæ cæperit, and hanc sibi per infidelitatem subjugaverit, illico transformat se in

diversarum personarum species atque similitudines, and mentem quam captivam tenet in somnis deludens, modo læta, modo tristia, modo cognitas, modo incognit as personas ostendens, per devia quaq; dederit. Et cum solus spiritus hoc patitur, Infidelis mens hoc non in animo, sed in corpore opinatur evenire. Quis enim non in somnis and nocturnis visionibus extra se educitur, and multa videt dormiendo, quæ nunquam viderat

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vigilando. Quis vero tam stultus and hebes est, qui hæc omnia quæ in solo spiritu fiunt, etiam in corpore accidere arbitretur; cum Ezechiel Propheta visiones Domini in spiritu, non in corpore, vidi? Et Johannes Apostolus Apocalypsis, Sacramentum in spiritu, non in corpore, vidi, and audivit, sicut ipse dicit, statim inquit fui in spiritu. Et Paulus non audet dicere se raptum in corpore. Omnibus itaque publice anunciatum est, quod quitalia and his similia credit, fidem perdit; and qui fidem rect am in Domino non habet, hic non est ejus, sed illius in quem credit, id est, Diaboli. Nam de Domino nostro scriptum est, Omnia per ipsum fact a sunt. Quisquis ergo credit posse fieri aliquam creaturam, aut in melius, aut in deterius immutari, aut transformari in aliam speciem vel similitudinem, nisi ab ipso Creatore qui omnia fecit, and per quem omnia facta sunt, procul dubio infidelis est, Pagano deterior. 'Tis true indeed,

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the Pontifical Authors make a great stir in their Answers to this decree of the Ancyran Council; sometimes endeavouring to evade its force with their absurd interpretations, sometimes to throw dirt in the face of the Council, as if it were not to be regarded: But Alciat in his Parerga doth ingeniously confess, that in these their answers, Nec C lum, nec Terram attingunt, they have neither head nor tayl. And which is more to be wondred at, Martin Delrio the Jesuite is in this point so ingenious, as to dissent from Baronius, who judgeth that this Council was held at Rome, under Damasodus, in the dayes of St. Hierome; Delrio for sundry reasons, believing it to have been really held at Ancyra, the Metropolis of Galatia, according to the common assertion of those who collected the ancient Cannons. Now this Decree of the Ancyran Council, was the more seasonable,

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in regard that a little before, Manes or Manichæus had spread abroad the Christian world, that old Heathenish Doctrine of the two Principles, one of good, and the other of evil: and it is

remarkable, that Witches and Manichæans are coupled together, by the Emperours Dioclesian and Maximian, in their Rescript to Julian the Proconsul of Africa, de Maleficis and Manichæis, as it is cited out of the Gregorian Code by Ruffinus in his Collation of the Jewish with the Roman Laws. About a hundred years after, and somewhat more, Priscillian and his followers did in a great measure embrace the Doctrine of Manes; insomuch, that in the year five hundred sixty three, there was a Council held at Bracara, a town of Gallicia in Spain, against the Priscillianists. In the Decrees of this Council, Manes and Priscillian are frequently joyned together, for their foolish conceits

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concerning the power of the Devil, or evil Principle; but especially they have one Decree, very considerable to our present purpose, wherein they anathematize all those, who believe that the Devil can make any Creature, or so much as raise storms and tempests by his own authority or power; the words are these, Si quis credit, quod aliquantas in mundo creatur as Diabolus fecerit, and tonitrua, and sulgura, and tempestates, and siccitates, ipse Diabolus sua autoritate faciat, sicut Priscillian us dixit, Anathema sit: Wherefore if the Devil cannot raise thunder and lightning and tempests by his own power, he did no more in the case of Job, then Eliah, or any mortal man may do, when he receives a commission from God. Hence I infer, that the Doctrine of Witchcraft, magnifying the Diabolical Power beyond its due proportion, doth savour too rankly of Priscillian and Manes, and the Heathen world.

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Chap. IV. Considered. The First Argument if rightly understood, is so firm and sure, that I never expect a sufficient answer. Let any one but consider with himself, the persons now a days condemned for Witches, and then let him tell me, whether one of a thousand be a person of quality. They are generally old women poor miserable and despicable. I confess that before the restauration of Learning, in the times of Barbarism and ignorance, there were some who were thought to deal with the Devil, meerly because they excelled in knowledge, as Pope Sylvester for one; who lived about a thousand years after Christ. I confess also that now and then in the Courts of Princes, some have been accused for Witchcraft out of Politick ends.

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So Richard the third would needs make Jane Shore a Witch in order to the Design which he had on the life of the Lord Hastings. Nevertheless it hath been for these many ages, and still is a thing very rare, for persons of note to be charged with the Crime of Witchcraft. Now on the contrary, in our Translation of the Bible we Read of Witches indeed, but who were they? Why either they were sovereign Princes, Or they were the Priests, Philosophers and wise men of the World, there being no mention of any other, except the Woman that dwelt at Endor. The truth is when I think with my self, how ready the Sorcerers were to Pharaoh King of Ægypt, and Nebucadnezzar King of Babylon, They seem unto me to be a sort of men, bred up in the Court; Just as to this day in the Turkish Empire, (which in many things doth resemble the ancient Monarchyes)

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the Great Turks Seraglio is the Aeademy, from whence proceed the Governors of Church and State. for so these Sorcerers seem to have been in antient times, the great Ministers of Church and State. Nor will this Opinion of mine, seem strange unto those who Read the Book of Daniel and well observe it. There we may find, by the example of Daniel and the Three Children, the way how the Magicians were bred up of old. Namely they were chosen men for goodness of parts, they were bred up at Court, fed with the Kings Wine and the Kings Meat, Instructed in all manner of Learning, and afterwards according as they approved themselves to their Royal Master, they were advanced to the Supreamest places of Government. For it is plain that Sorcerers, Magicians, Astrologers, Chaldeans and the like, were all the same sort of men; and that Daniel

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and his Companions were lookt upon as such: Otherwise they had never been sought after to have been slain among the rest, when the Kings decree went out against the wise Men. Nay, what say ye, if Daniel himself at last came to be so famous, that he was made the Master or Prince of the Magicians? These things being so, let any one lay aside prejudice, and then let him tell me, whether these famous men which our Translators call Sorcerers, and our modern old Women that are hanged for Witches, have any likeness or resemblance to one another; and whether or no, my argument be not strong and good, wherein I conclude it as a great sign, that the Witch in our Translation of the Scripture, could not be the same with our mdoern reputed Witch; because of the vast difference which may be observed, in their quality and in the education of their persons. This I

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am sure of that skill in Ancient Magick, was so honourable, that it was a condition required in all such, as were capable to be chosen Kings of Persia. The Second Argument is not so strong I confess, but that it might have been spared; because it is easie to undervalue the Sadduces, as an erroneous Sect. However 'tis plain, that not only they, but we also must necessarily interpret the Scriptures in several places, to speak according to the apprehension of the vulgar. For when the Law of Moses doth forbid men, to consult with the dead; We must not think that any could really do so. So that the Law only forbids the pretenders to that art, who by such pretenses deluded the people. In like manner though I should grant, that in this precept, thou shall not suffer a Witch to live, the Hebrew word is rightly Translated by our English word Witch; yet

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it would not follow, that there was any such thing as a Witch indeed. It would only follow, that the vulgar did believe there was, being deluded by those who for their own ends might pretend to such an Art. To the Third Argument some men do answer, that 'tis an unlikely thing, Witchcraft should be practised openly, when there was so severe a Law against it as this. Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live. Truely I shall easily grant, that when this Law was in force, then the Idol Priests were not permitted to play those pranks, which we interpret Witchcraft. But 'tis apparent, out of the History of the Kings of Judah, that they frequently rejected the Law of Moses, and setting up Idols did consequently encourage those kind of men, who were necessary instruments for the performance of Idolatrous worship. Then again in the time of reformation, when the

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Law of Moses was restored; frequently down went the Idols, and their Priests were either slain or banished, as also all that practised the same impostures. Now the Witch of Endor might escape, by the connivance perhaps of Sauls officers, yet it appears plain, that those who were said to have familiar Spirits, and to be turned out of the Land by Saul, were people of a known profession. Otherwise, there could not have been any considerable execution done upon them, so as to deserve the expression, that Saul had turned them out of the Land. And this will further appear, out of the actions of Josiah, who when he threw down Idols and did other acts of reformation; is said at the same time, to have put away the workers with familiar spirits;

which he could never have done so soon, had they been such secret and occult practisers as our pretended Witches,

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but he must have tarried till such times as he could first discover them. Having already shewed that there is no such thing as a Witch in Scripture. This First Argument that from thence doth prove, there is no such thing as a Witch at all, I think is past exception. For when the Law of Moses takes notice of lesser things, it would never have passed over in silence, things of greater moment, if they had been true. Diabolical Copulation being worse than bestial, and bloody Teats suckt by Devils, far worse than ordinary Issues. But of all I most admire, that those Nations which have believed Witchcraft, have also believed and made experiment of certain signs for its discovery. Yet never any could think of a sign to discover adultery. Only the Law of Moses, which is so curious in the discovery of Adultery, hath past by all those

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many signs, which are commonly made use of for the discovery of Witchcraft. Against this Second Argument. I never heard any thing but canting stuff, which passeth my understanding. But there is one way of answering it very easie, because it will serve to answer any thing. Namely that which is taken, from the two common places, wherein ignorance is wont to hide it self. I mean on the one hand, mysterious ways of Providence; as also on the other hand, the unknown designs of the Kingdom of darkness. The Third Argument I confess, would have been stronger and better urged, if I had not insisted on the Devils killing of men, at the desire of a Witch; but rather on such actions, as are undoubtedly beyond the power of a Creature to perform. For it is impious to affirm, that the Devil can raise the dead,

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or Create and the like, for in these cases, if the Devil performed any thing, it must be not by Gods permission, but his Commission, as the Prophets and Apostles did of old. That is God must do it for him: Which gratification of an old Womans malice, is wholy inconsistent with Divine goodness. The Last Argument is of exceeding great weight, if we rightly consider the wonderful and astonishing works, which in all ages have been ascribed unto Witches. What Miracle is there of Christ, which they have not equalled? To be born of a Virgin, is a thing that deserves the highest admiration. Yet if you'l believe the assertors of Witchcraft

in their Writings, The Devil may as a Succubus receive the seed of a man, and presently as an Incubus convey it into the Womb of a Virgin. Hence it is that Delrio inveighs against the Calvinists, for not believing

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that the Virgin Maryes Hymen was entire after Christ was born. As if the force of the Miracle lay in that particular consideration, and not in her being with Child, without the help of a man. I am not ignorant, that some men will gravely say, they do not believe, that Devils can get Women with Child, or that they can do any real miracle. To these men I must still make the same answer, that I do not care what they believe, but what hath been generally believed in all ages. And therefore I shall conclude that since Holiness of Doctrine, may out of a bad design proceed from an unholy spirit; tis dangerous to depreciate the Miracles of Christ; by setting up others of equal value, notwithstanding any pretence of Holiness in the one, and unholiness in the other. This I have done with the arguments, which I brought against

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Witchcraft, and shall now consider what hath been objected against my using the authority of the Ancyran Council. Some say that I have not quoted the Ancyran decree faithfully, but have left out what makes against me. Wherefore now to please them, I shall set down the beginning of the decree which before was left out. The Words are these. Vt Episcopi eorumque ministri omnibus viribus elaborare studeant, ut perniciosa et a diabolo inventam, sortilegum et maleficam artem, Irenitus ex siarochiis suis eradicent. Et si aliquem virum aut fæminam, hujusmodi sceleris sectatorem invenerint; turpiter dehonestatum deparochiis suis ejicant. Ait enim Apostolus; Hæreticum hominem post secundam et tertiam correptionem devita. Sciens quia subversus est, qui ejusmodi est. Subpersi sunt et a diabolo capti tenentur, qui direlicto creatore suo, a diabolo suffragia quærunt. Et ideo a tali peste,

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mundari decet sanctam Ecclesiam. In these words I would fain know, what there is that makes against me. Unless any one believes that by Ars Malefica, they meant Witchcraft in our modern sense. But tis apparent they did not so, by the last clause of their decree, wherein they declare that he is an Infidel and worse than a Pagan, who believes that any one besides the Creator, can either make a Creature, or transform it into any

other sort of likeness. By these words it appears, how much they dissent from the common opinion concerning Witches which makes them able to transform themselves and others into the likeness of beasts. The common opinion doth also believe that Witches do on certain nights ride through the air to places far remote, and perform service to the Devil. This in like manner the Council doth deny. So that when we read in their decree maleficam

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artem, he must not understand the vulgar Witchcraft, but something of another meaning. Now what that meaning is, I suppose may be gathered out of the decree, which Constantius the Emperour and Julianus Cæsar made unto the people, as may be seen in the Theodosian and Justin. Codes. I shall setit down word for word. Nemo haruspicem consulat, aut Mathematicum; Nemo hariolum, Auguram and Vatem, prava confessio conticescat. Chaldæi, and magi, and cæteri, quos maleficos obfacinorum magnitudinem vulgus appellat, nec ad hanc partem aliquid moliantur. Sileat omnibus perpetuo divinandi curiositas. Etenim suppliciopatibus tenetur, gladio ultiore prostratus, quicunque jussis nostris obsequium denegaverit. Here we may see, that judicial Astrology, observing of Birds, and observing the entrals of sacrificed beasts, are amongst other things, censured as maleficæ artes. I say amongst other things, for besides

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these there were several ways of divination that came under the same censure. I shal only mention sortilegium, or that kind of Lottery which was performed by the opening some book or other, and observing the place which first opened it self. The Heathens would make use of Homer and Virgil, The Christians made use the Old and New Testament, calling this way of divination, sortes sanctorum, and sortes Apostolorum. By this time me thinks it plainly appears, that the Ancyran Council in the beginning of their Decree, did only forbid the Heathen Religion or Superstition and that they did not intend our modern Witchcraft, which in the latter end of their decree they plainly evacuate by taking away its chief ingredients. The truth hereof did so appear unto many Pontifical Writers, that they either quarrel with the Council its self or with this decree. Amongst

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the rest Delrio, whom I said to be more ingenious than Baronius, in acknowledging the Decree to belong to the Council of Ancyra

whereas Baronius refers it to a Roman Council under Pope Damasus, I say Delrio is by no means ingenuous in mutilating the Decree by rejecting the greater part thereof, namely that which makes against those opinions of Witches and Witchcraft which he endeavours to maintain in his Magical Disquisitions. But I am still of Aleiats opinion that those who have endeavoured to answer this Decree of the Ancyran Council have said nothing to the purpose.

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CHAP. V. An Answer to their Arguments who endeavour to prove there are Witches. And now it is worth the while to consider, what these men can say for themselves, who so obstinately maintain there are Witches. For they being on the affirmative part, are bound by the Laws of disputation, to prove what they affirm; and 'tis sufficient for their adversaries to confute their proofs: But alas! these men are generally ignorant of the History of Ages that are gone and past, and of the Scriptures also, as to what concerns the question in hand: Wherefore they are wont to wave arguments, and to cry out, this is a

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question not to be disputed on, in regard it is a matter of fact, and consequently the object of sense, not of reason. Thus when they are got to their Castle of defence, they make a great noise, and cry out upon the unreasonableness of those men, who will not believe what so many worshipful persons in the world have heard and seen. And what is that I pray? Why they have heard Trumpets sound, and Drums beat, when neither Trumpeter nor Drummer have been near the place. They have seen chairs and stools move up and down a room, when no body toucht them, and many other things as strange. Thus will they tell stories of this nature from morning to night if you please, though when they have done, they say nothing to the purpose. For suppose that all these stories were unquestionably true, yet they would not suffice to prove Witchcraft. I confess indeed

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they would evince the being of Spirits, a thing which no wise man can deny, though he doth not believe it: For it is one thing to doubt, and another to deny. For my own part I firmly believe, there are many thousands of spirits, made of an incorporeal matter, too fine to be perceived by the senses of men. Nor will I

gain-say the Authority of so many in the world, who affirm they have seen and heard the strange things which I just now mentioned; supposing that these spirits may often play mad pranks amongst us. But still I demand a reason, why I should believe that they do so, upon the account of a Contract made with any man or woman; for till this is proved, the question of Witchcraft stands unconcerned. Well then, how do the affirmers of it go about to prove, that any man or woman is interested in these Devilish pranks? why truly by telling

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such stories as these; namely, that persons tormented by Devils, have fallen into their fits, at the sight, or upon the touch of suspected Witches: As also that persons thus tormented, have seen the suspected Witches in this or that place of a room, where no body else could see any thing at all; that the standers by, having stroke with swords or knives at the places where the Witches were said to be, the bewitched parties have cryed out, that the Witches were wounded in such and such parts of their bodies, though their bodies were then many miles distant; and that some immediately, going to their habitations to see, have found it true. Now here it is to be observed, that these kind of stories are far different from those which I said before did evince the being of Spirits; for they are attested by numerous authorities, and worthy of credit: But

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these are quite contrary, and are founded partly in the juggling delusions of confederated impostors, partly again in the errors or ridiculous mistakes of vulgar rumours: Just as the City of London, hath been confidently reported to be attempted with a Fire-ball, when a poor Linck-boy knocking of his Link, had left part of its flames blazing in a door. Nevertheless, that I may not be too strict with my advesaries, and to do them a courtesie meerly for the disputation sake, I care not if I grant, that some of these stories are true, Namely, that there have been persons vexed by Devils at the sight, or upon the touch of suspected Witches, and quiet again when they were parted; for though should grant this, I see no reason yet to grant there are Witches, but rather to conclude, that these spirits, who are so frolick and gamesome in doing us mischief, when they perceive

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persons suspected to have set them a work, may on purpose so mannage their malicious tricks, as to confirm the suspition,

promote the accusation, procure the condemnation of these miserable wretches, and then may count this the cream of their malicious jest, or the height of their frolick, to see poor innocent people hang'd. Now this answer of mine, although it be needless, and ex-abundanti, is far more easie and unconstrained, then any thing that the contrary opinion shall answer to those objections, which may be made against that absurd and ridiculous conceit, of wounding the Witches body at many miles distance. Again, they are wont to say, for the proof of Witchcraft, that immediately upon the threatning or cursing, used by this or that person, such or such an accident hath hapned to the party so threatned and cursed. Those men would do well to consider,

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that this world hath stood many thousands of years, and is of vast extent, containing many Countries or Nations full of men, and with diverse interests and passions; wherefore it is not to be wondred at, if there hath often hapned in it a notable concurrence of events. 'Tis certain, that poor old people when they are abused by the insulting petulancy of others, being unable to right themselves either at Law or at Combate, for want of money and strength of body, do often times vent the passion of their discontented souls in threats and curses. 'Tis also certain, that many men troubled with Diseases of the head, or Diseases of the heart, do seem to be in perfect health, and yet fall down dead on a sudden. Now if these two accidents should meet together, I should see nothing but what is natural, nor should I cry out upon the Devil and Witchcraft.

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But methinks I hear some men object and say with a great deal of vehemence and confidence; what need there be any dispute about these stories, since parties themselves have confessed their own Witchcraft; and can there be any thing clearer then self- confession? To this I answer, that the wisest men in the world, may by imprisonment and torture be brought to confess any thing, whether it be true or false; as many miserable Creatures, confessing themselves Witches, have had their Confessions extorted from them by such cursed means. Besides, I do not doubt, but some poor, silly, melancholick old wretches, have really believed themselves Witches, and not to be guilty of those actions, which not only their foolish neighbours, but worshipful men in the World have charged them with. Nor is it to be wondred at by any one that considers the strange effects

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of melancholly, especially if it hath been heightned by poverty, or want of good diet, by ignorance, solitariness, and old age: For that such kind of people take their very dreams to be real visions and truths, I am sure, not only by consequences drawn from their actions reported in Books, but by the experience also of my own acquaintance. The truth is, want of knowledge in the Art of Physick makes men attribute unto Spirits meer natural distempers: Nay, Physitians themselves, who have excellently laboured in Anatomy and Chymistry, perhaps have added little or nothing to the Diagnostick part of Diseases, so happily begun by Hippocrates: Hence it is, that we are still in the dark as to the abstruser distempers of humane bodies, especially such as arise from melancholly; which are of so many sorts, and have such wonderfull effects, that whosoever should rightly

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describe them, and make them plainly manifest, he would discover unto us an unknown world, full of unheard of prodigious monsters. Thus I have sufficiently answered the most material objections, not thinking it worth the while to insist upon every triffler, such as this is; why do not you believe that which so many thousand of wise men in the world have believed? Sure they could not be all deceived: As if a man did not trumpet forth his own folly, by such an argument, when the various Religions that have been in the world, are more than enough to convince one, how absurd and ridiculous the wisest of men are in matters of Opinion or Belief.

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Chap. V. Considered. 'Tis a very usual though a ridiculous thing for those who affirm, Witchcraft when they are in company with others, who deny it instead of arguments to tell I know not what kind of stories concerning Spirits. And when they have talkt an hour together, you shall find nothing in their discourse, that truly concerns the question of Witchcraft. In regard a man may believe not only Spirits but apparitions also, and Dæmoniacks. That is, He may not believe only there are Spirits, but that they also appear unto men, and sometimes possess their bodies, yet be far from believing Witches or Witchcraft. Now, if at any time they speak pertinently to the question, you shall find their arguments to be grounded either on the folly

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of some, or the knavery of others; or vulgar fabulous reports, or melancholy, or other diseases incident to humane bodies. The

truth is their arguments don't deserve to be taken notice of, nevertheless I shall here touch upon a way of arguing wherein they please themselves very much. 'Tis this, surely he must needs be a meer Sceptick, who will not believe matter of fact witnessed and attested by the oaths of so many, who living in sundry ages and several Countries, have by their depositions so convinced the judges that they have sentenced thousands and thousands to death. He that will not believe there is a Witch after all these testimonies, may as well deny there was ever such a man as Julius Cæsar. But by their favour there is no comparison between these two Cases, for that there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, hath been attested by such men who

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were capable of seeing and hearing him, he being an object of their senses. But Spirits being not the objects of sense, their actions must needs be obscure, and not so manifest unto true reason, as obnoxious unto fancy and immagination. Which how strange and roving and monstrous it is in many men can hardly be explained. But again, there is a great deal of difference between believing that there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, and believing of a Witch; For I cannot suppose that those who affirm there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, can have any design in such an affirmation. Whereas the affirmers of Witchcraft may palpably design their own interest in regard there have been in all ages a sort of men, who by a pretended holiness, and I know not what kind of sawcy acquaintance, with the Deity have set themselves off unto the people to a great advantage,

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and enhansed the value or price of their exercising Trade, which Trade receives great estimation or repute from persons pretendedly bewitched. Thirdly, I know not what passion that belongs to a man, can incite him to affirm falsely the being of Julius Cæsar. But envy, malice, an insatiate desire of revenge, and coveting of other mens goods may easily provoke wicked and unjust men, to seek the life of others and by perjuries or false accusations to charge them with the sin of Witchcraft. Whereunto we may adde, that these unworthy accusations are much encouraged by those men, who on such occasions make use of conjuring prayers, and from thence do draw unto themselves a false reputation of Sanctity or more, than ordinary communion with God. Now this is certain that in the sayings and actions of men, whereas we desire a

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true estimate, we ought chiefly to consider, Cui bono, that is for what end or advantage they were said and done. CHAP. VI. How the Opinion of Witches came at first into the World. By this time methins I cannot chuse but wonder at the large spreading of this foolish Opinion amongst men, and its taking such deep root in their minds: But then again, I cease to wonder when I consider with my self, that some men are Knaves, others are Fools, and that all men have fear implanted in them by Nature, the very strongest of all their passions; for although it be an impious saying, and irrational, that fear was the first thing which

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brought Gods into the world, yet I am apt to believe, it first of all brought in these omnipotent Devils, that contract with Witches: For melancholick persons being exceeding timerous by Nature, and of exceeding strong imaginations, upon the seeing or hearing of any frightful thing are very prone unto troublesome dreams, and apt to create strange apparitions in their own brains; which dreams and apparitions, no man in the world shall perswade them to the contrary, but that they are real truths, especially if their melancholly be excessive, and border upon madness: Add hereunto, that other men not addicted to melancholly, may upon sundry occasions meet with apparitions; namely, sometimes when they are sick of Feavers, sometimes when their minds have been possessed, and their imaginations wrought upon by frightful stories; and sometimes again,

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when their eyes being weak, they walk in a thick air towards evening by the water side. Not to mention those disturbances which may arise in mens fancies from an inordinate diet, either in quantity or quality, and from sundry other irregularities, it being easie for a man to be troubled with the Nightmare, before he shall be able to get fast asleep, if he goeth into a cold bed when his body is stiff with cold. Now that these and many other like occasions did oftentimes present apparitions unto men, was well enough known unto those who governed the ancient world, especially the Eastern parts thereof, for they were wise Politicians, famous in their Generations, and very well experienced in the Nature of Man: wherefore knowing how furious and head-strong a Beast the Multitude is, not to be dealt with unless you come as it were on their blind

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side, that is, unless you take them by the weakest part, and lay hold on their passion of fear, (I say knowing this) they promoted these fears of the people, and improved them for the designs of Government. Hence it came to pass, that whatsoever was extraordinary in Nature, and apt to astonish, they ascribed unto these Apparitions or Spirits: Namely, in the starry Heavens, the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, Thunder and Lightning in the Clouds, Pestilential seasons, and seasons of Famine here below, and also the most hideous of Diseases, whether they were strange kind of Tumours in the body, or Convulsion fits, or several sorts of madness, and the like: For the remedying of which disastrous accidents, and the taking away of their malignant effects, many Charms or Spells were ordained, many exorcising or conjuring prayers were invented; In a word, many Religious

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Rites or Ceremonies of worship were instituted, with a world of variety and fancy. The Ægyptians, that ancient and wise people, the very Fathers of learning, had a respect unto these kind of Spirits in their publick worship, as may be gathered from Plutarch in his Treatise concerning the decay of Oracles, where he brings in this consideration of their Religious Rites, as a probable argument, that they were the first Opinors of Dæmons; I mean, the first that brought in the Opinion of the existence of Devils. In process of time, these actions of the Priests, and grand Politicians of the world, began to be imitated by private persons, not only men, but women also, such as she was that dwelt at Endor; for what will not some attempt to do, when a necessitous poverty doth torment them with a greedy desire of gain? These kind of shirking people, a Generation

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of impudent Liars, Mountebanks in Divinity and Physick, have all along pester'd the Ages in which they lived. Hippocrates treating [Greek omitted], or the Falling Sickness, hath excellently well described the knavish impostures of some in his times, who to cloak their ignorance of that Disease, pretended it came immediately from the hand of God, and therefore was to be cured with certain expiations and charms. These men, he saith, had nothing but God in their mouths, and yet notwithstanding this holiness, they basely deluded the people with Magick cheats: So also did the Heathen Divines, I mean their pretended Philosophers, men full of words and beards, who for the love of

gain, and a croud of Disciples, would frequently make shew of I know not what sublime kind of knowledge, and intimate acquaintance with the Deity, by vertue whereof, they

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would undertake to charm an exorcise the evil spirits. Lucian in his Dialogue, Entituled [Greek omitted], lovers of lyes, makes very good sport with these kind of knaves. Now when Hunger and Covetousness had engaged private persons, in such kind of actions as the Priests were engaged in out of policy, they not enduring to see their Office invaded, did declare unto the World, That all such as invaded sacred things, contrary to the due Rites and Ceremonies, were so far from any Communion with the Gods, that they were rather abandoned by them, and exposed unto the society of evil Spirits; by which Conversation they became full of malice, and all sorts of vice and mischief, like unto the Devils with whom they conversed; for that this was the assertion of the ancient Chaldaean Priests, is evident in that Treatise of Jamblichus, which treats

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of the mysteries of the Egyptians, Caldæans and Assyrians. And thus I suppose I have given a true account of the rise and origine of Witchcraft. But howsoever this opinion of Witches might probably take its first rise in the Eastern parts, it quickly also came into the West, and thereat length it very much prevailed, by reason of the Platonick Philosophers: For these men being addicted unto Fabling and Allegorizing, became so vain, as to turn, by an overweening credulity, their Fables and Metaphors into reality. I confess this Doctrine of theirs, that Knowledge and Vertue are the two things which purifie the Soul of man, and bring it into a God-like perfection, is praise-worthy; As also on the contrary, that Vice and ignorance corrupt men with a Diabolical and Bestial pravity: Nevertheless 'tis not to be endured, that

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such similitudes as these, should be the ground of asserting some mens visions and frequent conferences with the Gods, other mens associations and confederacy with Devils: For my part, I can see no difference between the actions of the Phylosophical Heathen Priest, and the Magician or Witch, but only this, that the one had Law or Authority on his side, the other had not. This is so manifest, that Valentinian and Valerian, though Christian Emperors, were fain to gratifie the greater part of their

Subjects, being Heathens, by making a Law, wherein they did vindicate the Religion of their Ancestours, that is the Heathen, from the foul aspersion of Witchcraft. This Law may be found in the Theodosian Code, though it be left out in that of Justinian. In a word, whosoever shall read the Platonick writings, he shall find them full of confident Discourse

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about that which they did not understand, concerning the Gods, Dæmons, and Spirits of men: Much do they talk of a Familiar Spirit which every man hath, calling it sometimes the [Greek omitted], sometimes [Greek omitted], sometimes the [Greek omitted]. Nor is it to be wondred at, if Christian Authors have too much exceeded on such subjects; in regard 'tis well enough known how much the Primitive Christians admired the Platonick Sect. Nor is it unlikely, that in their frequent Exorcisings and Conjurations, they did but imitate the Platonicks, who themselves did therein but tread the steps of the ancient Ægyptian Priests: Amongst whom it was usual to Conjure the Devils with strange kind of threats, namely, that if they would not do as the Priests would have them, they would threaten to tear the Heavens asunder, and to reveal the secret of Isis, with other threats of the like

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Nature; as may be seen in the aforesaid Treatise of Jamblicus. Chap. VI. Considered. The Religion of the ancient Heathens did mainly consist of such kind of sacrifices and other cemonies, as were ordained partly to conciliate and procure the favour and assistance of good spirits. Through such kind of sacrifices as these Longinamus the Platonist told Saint Augustine that the way to true happiness did lead, for there was no communication with the Gods, as the Platonists held but by the mediation of good Dæmons whom they affirmed to be the messengers and interpreters between Gods and men, insomuch that Plato himself makes the whole business or art of Religious Priests whether Prophesie or Miracles, or sacrifices to

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depend on Dæmons, [Greek omitted] saith Plato speaking of the Dæmoniacal nature, [Greek omitted]. Now the way which the Priest insisted on in Courting and procuring the presence of good Dæmons, as also in chacing away the bad, was to observe the Sympathies and Antipathies between Cælestial and Terrestrial things. Which being rightly observed, they were able as they

pretended to make due compositions of things Terrestrial, in their sacrifices for the gaining of their intended purposes with the powers Cælestial. As may be seen more at large in the Treatise of Proclus, concerning Sacrifice and Magick. But when private Persons pretended to divination charms, raising of the dead invocation of Dæmons, and such like actions of the Priests. The Priest objected against them, their

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insufficiency in the art of sacrificing, and affirmed that by such illegal sacrifices, the communion of the good Dæmons could not be obtained, but only that of the Bad; by which means such illegal intruders into the Priestly Office, came at length to be infected with Diabolical natures. In process of time Christianity getting foot into the World, the Jews and Heathens lookt upon Christ as a Witch, and Christianity as Witchcraft. Tacitus doth down right, call it Maleficium. But the other side when the Christians got uppermost, they were quit with the Heathens, and paid them in their own coyn: For they confidently affirmed, that the Heathen Religion was a Commerce with Devils, and upon that score, several Laws were made against the practise of it, especially there was one or two Laws, I mean that of Constantius and Julianus, written Ad Populum, which I have already cited

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about the Ancyran Council, as also that other of theirs written Ad Taurum præfectum prætorio, which if they had been throughly executed, might have destroyed half the Roman Empire; For though the government was in the hands of the Christians, the better half did in these days still adhere to the old Heathen Worship, which was now condemned as guilty of Witchcraft. The truth is not long after in the days of Valentinian the elder (as may be seen in Ammianus Marcellinus) One Maximus a base fellow but gotten it seems into office did take occasion hereby to torture and kill people of all sorts and conditions in Rome; in so much that the Senate it self finding it to be every mans case, no man knowing whose turn should be next were fain to interpose, by sending a solemn Embassy to Valentian, which took such effect as to cause that rescript unto the Senate, which

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vindicated the heathen religion from the aspersion of Witchcraft, I shall set it down word for word. Imp. Valent. Val. and Grat. AAA. Ad Senatum. Haruspicinam ego nullum cum maleficorum causis habere consortium judico. Neque ipsam aut aliquam

præterea concessam a majoribus religionem genus esse arbitror
criminis, Testes sunt leges a me in exordio imperii mei datæ
quibus unicuique quod animo imbibisset colendi libera facultas
tributa est. Nec haruspicinam reprehendimus sed nocenter
exerceri vetamus. Thus we see how Witches came into the world,
first the Priests called private men so. Afterwards Priests of
different Religions called one another so, and condemned one
another's religions upon the account of Witchcraft or Commerce
with Devils. The truth is the Platonick

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Philosophers or Divines for the Priests were generally of that
sect, did so impudently pretend to the knowledge of Spirits, and
to an intimate acquaintance with them, as I can hardly blame
those who censured them as Witches. Can any one read the lives
of Plotinus Iamblicus, and others without amazement. 'Twas as
easie forsooth for one of these fellows to call a Dæmon, or a
God, into their presence, as for another man to call his own
servant. But indeed, I the less wonder at those lies which the
Platonists have so freely vented, concerning Spirits or Dæmons,
in regard their Master Plato concludes his Timeus with this
Doctrine, that as the bodies of men are cured with hurtful
medicines if wholesome ones wont serve turn. So the souls of
men, if they wont be led by truth, are to be restrained with lies.
Upon this account he there commends that fiction of the
transmigration

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of souls, and in particular he praiseth that Homer the Poet, for
making use of ancient Fables. Indeed had the Platonick
Philosophy been written in Verse, Plato might have been as
excusable, as Homer and the Platonists as the Poets upon the
account of Poetical fiction. But now who can read with patience,
such notorious lies in Prose. CHAP. VII. The Conclusion. Thus I
have in the first place shewn, that there is no such thing as a
Witch in Scripture: Secondly, that it took its beginning from
Heathen Fables. Thirdly, that it was afterwards improved by
Papal impostures. In the fourth place, I have produced several
arguments

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against the affirmers of Witchcraft. Fifthly, I have answered their
Arguments to the contrary. Sixthly and lastly, I have

endeavoured to shew by what means this Opinion of Witches came into the world; all which I have handled succinctly, pointing as it were at the heads of things, and leaving it unto some abler pen, to handle this question more at large; A thing which is very useful to be done; for if the Doctrine of Witchcraft should be carried up to a heighth, and the inquisition after it should be entrusted in the hands of Ambitious, Covetous, and malicious men, it would prove of far more fatal consequence unto the lives and safety of mankind, then that antient Heathenish custome of Sacrificing men unto Idol Gods; insomuch, that we stand in need of another Hercules liberator, who as the former freed the world from humane Sacrifices, should in like

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manner travel from Country to Country, and by his all-commanding Authority, free it from this evil and base custome of torturing people to confess themselves Witches, and burning them after extorted Confessions. Surely, the blood of men ought not to be so cheap, nor so easily to be shed, by such who under the Name of God, do gratifie exorbitant passions and selfish ends; for without question, under this side Heaven, there is nothing so sacred as the life of man, for the preservation whereof, all Polices or Forms of Government, all Laws and Magistrates, are most especially ordained: Wherefore I presume, that this discourse of mine, attempting to prove the vanity and impossibility of Witchcraft, is so far from any deserved censure and blame, that it rather deserves commendation and praise, if I can but in the least measure contribute to the saving of the lives of men.

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Chap. 7. Considered. To Handle the question of Witchcraft largely, would be a work of labour indeed. For it would require an interpretation of words, an account of History and Laws, as also of the wonders which may be produced, by Mathematical and Chymical operations. It would likewise require, a diligent investigation or search, into the passions diseases and various infirmities, incident unto men and women, especially that of deluded imagination. However I hope, those hints which I have here given, may prove useful, especially unto the ingenious Reader that can enlarge upon them with his own thoughts. Three things I have chiefly insisted upon. 1. That the opinion of Witchcraft is

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not to be found in Scripture. 2. That Politique interest hath founded it on fables. 3. That those fables discover themselves to be so, by their impossibility. Indeed amongst Heathens, they seemed not impossible; but consonant unto their great doctrine of the two principles of good and evil. But amongst Christians tis otherwise, who believe but one omnipotent, and him too good for malicious actions. Wherefore whosoever will undertake, to overthrow this discourse of mine (that we may bring things to an issue) I shall be content to subscribe, if he can but prove one of the two. Either that the Doctrine of Witchcraft, hath not been built upon such effects, as the transformations of creatures: Or else that these effects, are possible for the Devil to perform. The first must be proved Historically; and here he will have no help from the Inquisitors of

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heretical pravity, who in their various tryals and condemnations of Witches, have proceeded on the supposition of such effects. The second must be proved Philosophically, and not by the testimony of men. For it is far more easie, and far more rational to believe, that witnesses and lyars and perjured persons, than it is to believe; that an old Woman can turn her self, or any body else into a Cat, yet I confess, the witnesses may not alwayes be liars, but only deluded. For so strongly hath this opinion possessed the fancies of men, that tis probable some men have really believed, an Old Woman to have been the Hare, which they hunted; when they have lost the Hare, on a sudden, and found her panting. So they might believe as long as they pleased, But were I of the Jury, a Hundred of them swearing should never make me believe so too. And now me

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thinks, I can not think without trembling and horror, on the vast numbers of people that in several ages, and several Countries have been sacrificed unto this Idol opinion. Thousands, ten thousands, are upon record to have been slain, and many of them not with simple deaths, but horrid exquisite tortures. And yet how many are there more, who have undergone the same fate of whom we have no memorial extant. Since therefore the Opinion of Witchcraft is a meer stranger unto Scripture, and wholly alien from true Religion. Since it is ridiculous, by asserting fables and impossibilities. Since it appears when duly considered to be all bloody, and full of dangerous consequence, unto the lives and safety of men. I hope that with this my Discourse opposing an absurd and pernicious error I have not at all disobliged, any sober unbiased person; especially if he be

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of such ingenuity, as to have freed himself from a slavish subjection, unto those prejudicial opinions, which Custome and education, do with too much Tyranny impose.

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By way of Appendage to the preceding Discourse, I thought to have translated one of Lucian's Dialogues, called Lovers of Lyes; but being informed that it was already translated, I only ordered the Book-seller to Reprint it: Nor can it chuse but please the Reader, to see that the World is the same World still; and that fifteen hundred years ago, men had the same humors and thoughts, inrelation to the questionin hand,

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as they have now adayes: For between some men now alive, and those whom the incomparable wit describes in his Ingenious Dialogue, there is no difference to be perceived, but only this, that they in the Dialogue did wear long Beards, whereas now 'tis the fashion to cut the beard off, or at least to cut it very short.

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THE Apendage Considered. There are some who wonder, that I would offer to annex unto my book, a Dialogue of Lucian, who as they say was a known Atheist. But on the Contrary, he had too much Wit and Learning to be one. Nor did I ever meet with an Atheist in all my life, as to my own knowledge; and therefore am apt to believe, that those who are recorded such in History, were rather reputed then, real Atbeists. However I am sure, this Dialogue is not Atheistical. Otherwise Sir Thomas Moore, would never have taken the pains to translate it, out of Greek into Latine; and so to make it more communicable unto the Christian World. I say Sir Thomas Moore, A Man who for his Wit and Learning and Virtue, was whilst he lived, an

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ornament unto this his Country; and since his death, by his never dying fame, he still continues to adorn it. But why should I trouble my self, to gine any further satisfaction, unto a sort of men, who know nothing but a Syllogism, and whose Palats can relish nothing, which is not Metaphysically disputed, on both sides of the question, with a videtur quod sic, a and videtur quod non? Wherefore I shall no longer detain the Reader, from this

excellent Dialogue, which I having often Read, did as often find my pleasure renewed; in observing with what exquisite art, and delicatness of wit, our most ingenious Author, discovers the lying Spirit of Men.

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ꝑ [Greek omitted] Lovers of LIES: A DIALOGUE Made by the Famous LVCIAN. The Speakers, Tychiades and Philocles.

Tychiades. Can you tell me the reason, Philocles, why most men desire to lie, and delight not only to speak fictions themselves, but give busie attention to others who do? Philocles. There be many reasons, Tychiades, which compel some men to speak untruths, because they see 'tis profitable.

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Tychiades. This is nothing to the purpose. My question concern'd not them who Iye for profit: for such deserve pardon, and some praise, who have thereby defeated their enemies, and used it as a preservative against dangers; like Vlisses, who by such slights secured his own life, and the return of his companions. But I now speak of those, who prefer the very Lie before Truth, and take pleasure to busie themselves in Fables, without any necessary judgment. I would fain know what motives such men have to do so. Philocles. Have you met with any born with such a natural love to lying? Tychiades. There are many such. Philocles. What other motive can they have not to speak truth, but their madness? Else certainly, they would never prefer the worst thing before the best.

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Tychiades. This is nothing; since I can show you many of great discretion and wisdom in other things, who yet are Captives to this delusion, and love of lies. Nor am I a little troubled to see men of excellent judgment in other things, take delight to deceive themselves and others. You cannot but know those Ancients better then I, Herodotus, Ctesias in Cnidian, and the Poets before them, Homer especially; All men of great name, whose writings are stored with fictions. So that they not only deceived their hearers then but have conveyd their lies to us also in a preserved succession of excellent Poetry and Verses. I cannot, therefore, but blush for them, as often as they speak of a Schisme in Heaven, of Prometheus chains, the Gyants Insurrection, and the whole Tragedy of Hell. How Jupiter, also, for love became a Bull or Swan; and how a woman was transform'd into a Fowl

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or Bear. Besides their Pegasus's, Chymæra's, Gorgon's, Cyclop's, and the like strange prodigious fables, fit only to recreate the minds of Children, who yet fear Goblins, and Fayries. But these are things tolerable in Poets. How ridiculous is it that whole Cites and Nations should unanimously agree in a publick lie? Thus the Cretans are not ashamed to show Jupiters Tomb. The Athenians say, that Ericthonius grew from the earth; and that the first people of Attica sprung from thence, like Coleworts. Yet these speak much modestlier then the Thebans, who derive themselves from a Serpents teeth sown. Yet he who takes not such ridiculous fictions for true, but upon discreet examination thinks it proper only for a Cor bus, or Margites, to believe that Triptolemus was carried through the Air by winged Dragons; or that Pan came assistant to

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the Greeks from Arcadia into Marathon; or that Orithyia was ravisht by Boreas; is held irreligious and foolish, for dissenting from such clear and evident truths. So powerful is a received lie. Philocles.. Yet both Poets, Tychiades, and Cities are thus excusable, that the one mingle fictions with their writings, the better to take their readers. The Athenians, Thebans, and other Countries, make their beginnings more majestick, from such fabulous Originals. Besides, should all fiction be banisht Greece, how many reporters would dye of Famine? Since none there are patient to hear truth spoken gratis. In my judgment, therefore, they who delight in lies, for no other reason, but because they are lies, are most deservedly to be laught at. Tychiades. You say true. I now came from the learned Eucrates,

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where I heard many things fabulous, and incredible; or rather leaving them in the midst of their discourses, impatient of narrations so much beyond belief, like so many Hobgoblins they scared me away with their prodiges and wonders. Philocles. Eucrates, Tychiades, is a man of credit, nor can I believe that one of so deep a beard, of the age of threescore, and of such continued study in Phylosophy, should endure to hear another faign in his presence, much less that he should offer to faign himself. Tychyades. You know not, my friend, what lies he told, how constantly he affirmed them, and mingled Oathes with his fictions, and produced his children for witnesses. So that I looking upon him, thought variously; sometimes that he was

mad, and beside himself; sometimes that being a cheater he had long scape'd my discovery; and had carried

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about a contemptible Ape in a Lyons shape: so absurd were his discourses. Philocles. In the name of Vesta, what were they, Tychiades? I long to know what cosenage he could disguise with so long a beard. Tychiades. I usually, at other times, when I had leisure, Tychiades, visited him. But to day having occasion to speak with Leontichus, (who as you know, is my intimate friend) and being told by his boy, that he was early in the morning gone to visit Eucrates, who lay sick, as well to meet Leontichus, as to see him, (of whose sickness I was till then ignorant) I went thither, where I found not Leontichus, (who as they said, was newly departed) but a crowd of others; Among whom was Cleodemus the Peripatetick, Dinomachus the Stoick, and Iron; you know him; he that is so admired for Plato's discourses, as if

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he onely understood exactly his meaning, and were able to be his interpreter to others. You see what men I name to you; All Sages, famed for vertue, heads of their several sects; All venerable, and carrying an awfull terrour in their looks. There was present also Antigonus the Physitian, sent for, I suppose, out of necessity of the disease. Though Eucrates seemed to be much upon the recovery, and his sickness not dangerous. For the humour was again fallen into his feet. As soon as Eucrates saw me, remitting his voice, he feebly bad me sit down by him on the bed; whom, as I entred, I heard lowd and shrill. I very careful not to touch his feet, and using the accustomed complement, that I knew not of his sickness, but upon the first intimation came post, sate near him. The discourse of the company was concerning his disease, of which they had

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in part already spoken; and were then going on, each severally to prescribe a several medicine, and cure. Take up from the ground, said Cleodemus, with your left hand the tooth of a weesil, so kill'd as I said before, bind it in a Lyons skin, newly flead, then wrap it about your leggs, and your pain will presently cease. 'Tis not in a Lyons skin, as I have heard, said Dinomachus, but in a Virgin Hindes skin unbuckt; And so the receipt is more probable: For a Deer is swift, and most strong, of feet. A Lyon, indeed, is strong, and his fat, and right paw, and the stiff hairs of his beard are of great vertue, if one know how

to apply them every one with his proper charm. But they promise small cure of the gout. I also, once thought said Cleodemus, that a Stags skin was to be used for his fleetnesse; but since a certain wise Lybian hath me taught otherwise, and told me that

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Lyons are swifter then Bucks; for they, said he, catch these in hunting. The rest praised his reason, as well delivered by the Lybian Then said I, do you think such diseases, as this, are cured by charms, or that an inward malady is eased by an outward spell? Whereat they smiled, and seemed much to condemn my sillyness, as not knowing a thing so received, and not gainsaid, or disproved by any understanding man. Antigonus the Physitian seemed pleased with my question; who, it seems was formerly neglected in his offers to cure Eucrates by the prescriptions of his Art; which enjoyn'd him to abstain from wine, to eat herbs, and to study more remisly. Cleodemus, in the mean time, smiling, replied, saying, do you think it incredible, Tychiades, that such spells should be of power to cure diseases? I do, said I. Nor am I of so gross a sense, to believe that such outward receits,

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which have no affinity with the springs and causes of the infirmity within, should work, by charm, as you pretend, or by Imposture; or upon their bare application should instill cures. A thing not to be effected, though one should bind sixteen whole weesils in the Nemean Lyons skin. I have often seen a Lyon halt, and go lame with pain in his whole skin. You are a very puny, said Dinomachus, and have not learnt to know what power such spels have over diseases. Nor seem to me to understand the expulsion of periodical feavers, the charming of Serpents, and asswaging of botches, and other things performed by every old woman. All which being frequently done, why should you think cures of this nature impossible? You pile too much, Dinomachus, said I, and according to the proverb, drive out one nail with another. Nor doth it appear, that the things you speak of,

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are by such power effected. If, therefore, you prove not to me first by reason, that 'tis naturally possible that a feaver, or blayn, should be frighted with a divine name, or barbarous spell, and thereupon forsake the place swoln, you have but hitherto uttered old wives tales. Thus saying, said Dinomachus, you seem not to believe there are Gods; since you think it beyond the power of their names to work cures. Say not so, Good Sir, quoth I, for

there may without impediment be Gods, and yet your prescriptions may be deceitful and false. I adore the Gods, and behold their cures, and recoveries of sick people by regular medicines and Physick. Æsculapius, and his followers heal'd the diseased by wholesome prescriptions, not by the application of Lyons and Weesils. Let him enjoy his opinion, said Ion, I will report to you a miraculous passage. When I was a Boy, about

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the age of fourteen years, one came and told my father, that Midas his Vinedresser, a stout industrious servant, about the time of full market lay stung of a Serpent, which presently gangren'd his leg. For as he was bending a vine, and winding it about a pole, the Snake crept to him, and biting him by the great toe, presently slipt away, and retired into a hole; Whereupon he cryed out, and was ready to expire with pain. In the close of the relation we saw Midas himself, brought by his fellow servants in a chair, swoln all over, discolour'd, in appearance rankled, and scarce able to breath. My father being much grieved, a certain friend of his, there present, said, Take courage, Sir, I will presently fetch a Chaldæan, who shall cure him. Not to be tedious, the Babylonian came, restored Midas, and drew the venom from his body by a charm, and by the application

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of a stone, cut from the pillar of a deceased Virgin, to his feet; and, which is yet more. Midas rising from the chair, in which he was brought, went back into the field; so powerfull was the charm, and the stone taken from the tomb. Among his many other miracles, which he wrought, he went one morning early into a field, where having pronounced seven certain sacred names, taken out of an ancient book, and purged the place with brimstone and taper, and walkt it thrice round, he assembled to him all the Serpents of the country: So that drawn by force of the charm came many Snakes, Aspes, Vipers, Efts, Dartars, Lizards and Toades; only one ancient Dragon was left behind, who for age, I believe, and not being able to crawl disobey'd the spell. Whereupon, all are not here, said the Magician, and presently selecting one of the youngest Serpents,

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sent him Embassadour to the Dragon. Who not long after came also. When they were all assembled, the Babylonian puft upon them, and presently to our astonishment they were all burnt with his breath. Then said I, pray tell me Ion, did the young Serpent

Embassadour lead the old, or did he support himself by a staff? You are merry, said Cleodemus. I was once as great an Infidel in these things as you are now, and saw no reason to believe them; yet when I beheld the Barbarian stranger fly, (who as they report came from the North) I was convinced into a belief against my inclination. For what should I do, when I saw him carried in the Air, walking upon the water, and in a slow and leisurely motion pass through the fire? But did you, said I, see a Northern man fly, or walk upon the water? Most certainly, replied he, shod with pumps, after the manner of his Country. I

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forbear to speak of his smaller performances, his infusion of Love, expulsion of Devils, raising of the dead long buried, publick presentment of Hecate, and drawing down the Moon from Heaven. I will only report to you what I saw him do for Glaucias, the Son of Anaxicles. Glaucias no sooner began to inherit his dead fathers estate, but he fell in love with Chrysis, Demænetus daughter. I was Tutor to his studies. Who, had not love diverted him, had by this time learnt all the Peripatetick Sciences, since being but eighteen years old he had already gone over the Analyticks, and past through Aristotles Physicks to the end. Thus perplext with love, he revealed himself to me; who being his Tutor, as it became me, brought this Northern Magician to him, hired for four Crowns in hand (which were to buy things for the sacrifice) and sixteen more when Glaucias enjoy'd Chrisis. He

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observing the Moons increase, (the proper time for such enchantments) and having digged a hole in the house yard, about midnight, first call'd up to us Anaxicles, Glaucias father, dead seven months before. The old man stormed, and raged at his Sons love, but in conclusion gave license to his affection. Next, he raised up Hecate, who brought Cerberus with her. Then he call'd down the Moon, a various spectacle, by reason of her diverse appearances and changes. For first she resembled in countenance a woman, then she was transform'd into a beautiful Cow, then into a little dog. After this, fashioning a little Cupid of Clay, Go, said he, and fetch Chrysis hither. The Clay presently flew away, and shortly after she came and knockt at the door, and at her first entrance embraced Glaucias, show'd her self distractedly enamour'd, and accompanied him till we heard the Cocks

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crow. Then the Moon flew to Heaven, Hecate sunk into the earth, the Apparitions vanisht; and we about day break let Chrysis depart. Had you seen this, Tychiades, you would not long distrust the force of charms. You say well, said I, I would indeed believe this, had I seen it: But am otherwise to be pardon'd, if at such visions I be not as quicksighted as you. As for the Chrysis, you speak of, I know her to be an easie amorous woman. Nor do I perceive any need why you should employ an earthen Embassadour to her, or trouble a Magician from the North, or the Moon, for the affection of one whom for twenty drams you may draw as far as the Northpole, being a woman so readily prepared to meet your Incantations: Though she be thus unlike your apparitions. For they (as you report) at the sound of Brass, or Iron, vanish: But she no sooner hears Silver,

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but she runs to the sound. Besides I cannot but wonder at the Magician, that being able to inforce love towards himself in the women of greatest wealth, and thereby draw whole talents from them, he should for the inconsiderable price of four Crowns procure affection for Claucias. 'Tis folly in you, said Ion, to believe nothing. I would fain ask you, what you think of them who have deliver'd Dæmoniacks from their possessions, and have evidently charm'd forth their Devils. I need not tell you how many the Syrian, who came from Palestine, a man skill'd in such Arts, hath restored after they have fall'n down Lunatick, stared with their eyes, and foamed at mouth, and hath sent them away cured, and releast them, for great sums, of their distempers. For standing by them as they lie, he asks the evil spirit from whence he entred into the body.

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The possest person, mean time, is speechless, and the Devil replying in Greek, or some barbarous Language, tells from whence he is, and how he entred the man; whereupon he by adjuration and threats, if he offered to disobey, casts him out. I saw a Devil cast out black, and of the colour of Soot. No marvaile Ion, said I, that you saw such visions; Plato the father of your sect hath taught you to see Idæus, a spectacle too refined, and subtile, for our dull sense. Many others, as well as you, Ion, said Eucrates, have met with Devils, some by night, others by day; I have, not once, but a thousand times seen such Spectrums; and was at first frighted with them; but custome hath at length made them not strange, or unfamiliar; especially since an Arabian gave me a ring, made of the Iron taken from a cross, and taught me an ambiguous, diverse sensed charm, unless you refuse

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to give credit to me also Tychiades. How can I choose, said I, but believe Eucrates, the son of Dino, especially being so wise a man, and having the freedom to speak what you please with authority in your own house? Hear some passages of a statute of mine, then said Eucrates, which nightly appears to all my family, both men and maids, who can witness so much to you, as well as I. Of which of your Statues, said I? Did you not observe at your entrance, said he, a fair Statue standing in my Hall, the work of Demetrius, the Statuarie. Do you mean the Quoiter, said I, who stands wryed in a Gesture ready to deliver, with his quoit hand reverst, and one knee bent, as if he meant to vary posture, and rise with his throw? Not him, said he; the Quoiter you speak of is one of Myrons pieces. Nor do I mean the fair Statue next to him, filleted about the head with a bend;

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which is a piece of Polycletus's. You are also to pass over those which stand on the right hand as you enter; among whom are the Tyrant slayers, carved by Critias Nesiota. Did you not mark the statue by the conveyance of water, with the big belly, bald, halfnaked, part of the hairs of his beard plukt off, of huge sinews, and every way resembling a man? I mean Pelichus, he who is so like a Corinthian Captain. I saw such a one, said I, on the right hand of Saturn, having a wither'd wreath, and fillet on his head, and guilt plates on his breast; I, said Eucrates, caused them to be guilt, after he had in three dayes cured me of a desperate feaver. Was the famous Pelichus, then, a Physitian, said I? He is now, and take heed how you scoff at him, said Eucrates; least he shortly take revenge of you. I know the power of the Statue you laugh at; do you think he cannot as well inflict a feaver,

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as expell one? Be so powerful a Statue, propitious, and merciful to me, said I: pray, what else have your family seen him do? As soon as it begins to be night, said he, descending from his Pedestal, he walks round the house; all my servants have often met him singing: he hurts none that give him way, but passeth by them without disturbance; he washeth himself much, and playes all night, as we guess by the noise of the water. Consider, said I, whether your Statue be Pelichus, or Talus the Cretan, who lived with Minos, whose brazen Statue was Centinel and guardian of the Country. Were he not made of Copper, but wood, I should probably think he were not the workmanship of Demetrius, but

one of Dædalus motions. For you say, he frequently walks from his Basis. Beware, Tychiades, said he, you be not hereafter sorry for your flouts. I

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could tell you what he suffer'd who stole the farthings, which we every New Moon offer to him. The punishment of such a sacrilegious must needs be direful, said Ion. Pray what was it Eucrates? I desire to hear, how incredulous soever Tychyades be. Many farthings, said he, lay at his feet, and some other Silver coyns were fastened with wax to his knees, Besides diverse Silver Plates, offer'd to him by the devotion and gratitude of those whom he had recovered from feavers. A servant of mine, a Lybian, one of my Grooms, perceiving the Statute one night absent, adventured to steal his Oblations. Observe how Pelichus, finding himself at his return robbed, revenged himself, and bewrayed the Thief: Who all night walkt up and down the Hall in a Circle, unable, like one fawn into a Labyrinth to get out; till next morning he was apprehended with his stealths about him, and

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proportionably whipt. Nor did he live long after, but dyed miserably, beaten every night, as he said, and confirm'd it with the marks seen in his body next day. Now, if please you Tychiades, said Eucrates, laugh at Pelichus, and me, for a Dotter of Mino's time. Certainly Eucrates, said I, as long as Brass is Brass, and your statue but the creature of Demetrius, the Alopecian, who carved not Gods, but men, I shall not fear the image of your Pelichus, nor much care for the threats of the original, were he alive. Here Antigonus, the Physitian, seconding him said, I, Eucrates, have also a brazen Hippocrates, about a cubit long, which, as soon as the Candles are put out, walks circularly through all the house, making a noise, overturning boxes, compounding medicines, and slinging open doors; especially if we omit to pay him his yearly sacrifice. Doth Hippocrates the Physitian, then

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require to be sacrificed to, said I, and take it ill if he be not feasted with Oblations at his set times? Methinks 'twere honour enough to pour wine to him, or crown him with Garlands. Hear another passage, said Eucrates which I with many other witnesses saw about five years past. One harvest time, having dispatcht my reapers about noon into the field, I solitarily retired my self into a wood, to weigh and consider of some things.

Where, at my first entrance, I heard the howling of dogs, which I imagined to be my Son Manson, going then abroad, as his manner is, with his Companions to sport themselves, and hunt. But 'twas otherwise: for presently after followed an Earthquake, and a hideous bellowing like thunder. After this I saw a woman coming towards me of horrible aspect, and near half a furlong tall, having in her left hand a Torch, in her right a Sword, at least

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twenty cubits long. She had downward feet like a Serpent, upwards in the horrour of her countenance and visage, she resembled a Gorgon; having Snakes for hair, which partly twind about her neck, others hung loose on her shoulders. See, my good friends, said Eucrates, how I yet tremble to tell the story; and with-all show'd us the hairs on his armes stiff, and erected with fear. Ion, all the while and Dinomachus and Cleodemus, ancient men, gave him serious attention, as if drawn by the nose, and exprest a silent adoration of the incredible Colossus-half-furlong-woman, Gyant-like Hobgoblin. But I consider'd with my self, that such men as they, who read wisdome to young schollars, and were generally admired, differ'd only from children in their gray hairs and long beards, and were in all things else more easie to be deceived then they. Here Dinomachus put in, and said, pray tell

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me, Eucrates, of what size and bigness were her hounds? Bigger then Indian Elephants, replyed he, and alike black, their skin as rough, squalid and fowl. I, when I saw them, stood still, and withall turn'd the seal of the ring which the Arabian gave me to the inside of my finger. Whereupon Hecate striking the ground with her serpentine feet, made a great cleft, which reacht to Hell, into which she sunk by degrees. I assuming courage, and taking hold of a neighbouring tree, least astonisht with the darkness I should chance to fall in headlong, lookt in, and saw all the things of Hell; the burning Lake of Phlegeton, Cerberus, and Ghosts; some of which I knew, especially my father, whom I saw in the very garments we buried him. Pray, Eucrates said Ion, what did the souls departed do? What should they do, answer'd he, but converse in companies and societies with

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their friends, and Allies, in the Daffodil mead? Henceforth, then said Ion, let the followers of Epicurus urge arguments against Plato, and his discourses of the soul. But did you not see

Socrates and Plato among the dead? Socrates, replyed he, I saw, but not more clearly then to guesse at him by his baldness and strutting belly. Plato I knew not, nor is't fit I speak more then truth to my friends. After I had taken an exact and universal survey of things, the vault closed, and some of my servants, of which my man Pyrrhias here was one came thither to seek me before 'twas quite shut. Speak Pyrrhias, do I say true? Most true, by Jupiter, Sir, said the fellow, for I my self heard the barking of the dogs through the Cave, and saw the flashes of the Torch. Here I smiled to hear the howling, and flames put in by the witness. You have seen nothing strange, said Cleodemus, or

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what hath not been seen by others. For I, in my sickness, not long since, saw the like apparition. At which time Antigonus here visited me, and gave me seven dayes Physick for a Feaver, more hot and violent then fire. One day all left the room, shut the door, and stay'd without, by your prescription, Antigonus; if perchance solitariness might entice me into a slumber. But I, lying awake, saw a goodly youth approach me, cloathed in white; who after he had raised me, lead me through such another cleft down to Hell; as I presently perceived, when I beheld Tantalus, Tytius and Sisyphus. What need I report to you the rest? Briefly, I was brought to a Tribunal, where were present Æacus, Charon, the Destinies and Furies. Where also one sate as King, who seemed to be Pluto, by his reading of a Catalogue of their names who were to dye, and had already out-lived their

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limited time. The young man brought me, and presented me to him. But Pluto much displeased, said to him, his thread is not yet quite spun, let him therefore depart again. And fetch Demylus the Brasier, who hath exceeded his distaff. Whereupon I joyfully returned, releast of my feaver, and told all my neighbours, that Demylus was shortly to dye. Who then also lay sick, as 'twas reported. And shortly after we heard the cryes of them that lamented his death. What miracle is this? Said Antigonus. I knew one, who after he had been buried twenty dayes, rose again: For I gave him Physick before his death, and after his resurrection. Methinks, said I, in twenty dayes his body should putrifie or perish with famine. Unless you administred to an Epimenides. As we thus discourst, came in Eucrates Sons from exercise. One a grown youth, the other about the age of

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fifteen; Who having saluted us, sat down upon the bed by their father; and a chair was brought for me. Here Eucrates taking fresh hint from the presence of his Sons, said, so may I have comfort of these two, (and laid his hands on them) as that which I shall now tell you Tychiades is true. 'Tis well known how dearly I lov'd my wife, the mother of these, of happy memory; which I exprest both in my carriage to her while she lived, and after her death: Bor I burnt with her, her whole wardrobe, and the garments she most delighted in when she lived. The seventh day after her funeral, I lay in this bed, as I do now, having abated my sorrow. And silently reading to my self Plato's little tract of the soul, Dem nete entred, and sate down by me, as Eucratides (pointing to his younger Son) doth now. The boy childishly trembled, and waxt pale at the narration. I, proceeded

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Eucrates, as soon as I beheld her, imbraced her and sobbingly shed tears. She permitted me not to weep, but blamed me, that after all my other expressions of affection to her, I had not burnt one of her guilt pantofles, which, she said, was fallen down behind a chest; which we not finding, cast only the other into the funeral pile. As we thus talkt, an unhappy dog which I loved, lying upon the bed barkt, at which sound she vanisht. Afterwards we found the slipper under the Chest, and burnt it. Can you still doubt Tychiades, of truths so manifest, and every day apparent? By Jove, said I, they deserve to be clapt with a guilt Sandal, like children, who do not believe you, or impudently question the truth. Here Arignotus, the Pythagorean, entred, a man of long hair, and venerable aspect. You know he is famous for his wisdom, and Surnamed the Sacred. I was something

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relieved with his sight, and according to the Proverb, though I had now got an Axe against lies. For certainly, said I to my self, this wise man will stop their mouthes from reporting any more such prodigies. In a word, I thought fortune had unexpectedly sent some God to my succour. He sitting down in a place which Cleodemus resigned to him, first enquired of Eucrates his disease, and being informed how he did, askt us what we discourt of; for as I entred, said he, methought I heard you busied in an excellent subject. We were perswading this man of Adamant, said Eucrates, pointing at me, to believe therewere Devils. And that the shades and souls of men departed, did wander up and down the earth, and appear to whom they pleased. I could not choose but blush, and fix my look to the ground, out of reverence to Arignotus. Perchance Eucrates, said

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he, Tychiades holds that their Souls only do walk who dyed violently, namely such as were strangled, beheaded, crucified, or the like; and that those who dye naturally walk not. If this be his opinion, he is not to be blamed. No such matter, replied Dinomachus, he neither holds that there are such things, or that they were ever seen. How say you Sir, said Arignotus, looking frowningly upon me, do you deny such apparitions as are visible to all? You must pardon my infidelity, said I, who never saw any. If I had, I should believe as you do. If ever you go to Corinth, said he, ask for the house of Eubatides, and when 'tis shown you, by the Crancum, enter, and tell Tibius the Porter, you desire to see the place from whence Arignotus the Pythagorean conjured away the Devil, and rendred the house habitable. May we request the whole story? Replyed Eucrates.

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The house, said he, being haunted, was of a long time undwelt in. If any did adventure to inhabit it, they were scared, and persecuted away by a horrid and dismal Apparition; so that it began to fall to ruine, and the roof to drop; nor had any man the courage to euter into it. When I heard hereof, carrying with me certain *Ægyptian Books* (of which I have store upon such Arguments) I went to the house about the first sleep, much diffwaded, and almost violently restrained by mine Host, after he knew whither I meat to go; verily supposing I went to my destruction. Notwithstanding, I taking a Taper with me entred the house alone, and placing the link in the great hall, and my self on the floor, read silently to my self. In comes the Devil, thinking he was to deal with some vulgar fellow, and hoping to fright me like others. A rough, shaggy fiend, and blacker then darkness

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it self. At his first appearance he tryed, by making an orbicular assault, to vanquish me, and sometimes turn'd himself into a dog, then into a Bull, lastly into a Lyon. But I having a direful Spell in readiness, which I pronounced in the *Ægyptick tongue*, charm'd him back into a dark corner of the house. And having well observep the place where he sunk, I left speaking. In the morning, after every bodies despair, who thought to find me slain, like others, I, against the expectation, came forth and went to Eubatides; And told him the glad news, that he might safely inhabit his house, which was now purged and freed from Devils. Withall taking him, and many others (who followed out of

curiosity) along with me to the place where I saw the fiend vanish, I commanded it to be digged with pickaxes and spades. We had not digged above a yard deep, but we

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found a dead man, consumed, and nothing left to represent him but the Sceleton, which we took up and buried. And from that time the house ceased to be molested with visions. When Arignotus had finisht his narration, being a man of prodigious wisdome, and generally reverenced, there were not any of the company who did not condemn me of stupidity for being incredulous. Nevertheless, I neither daunted with his beard, nor their opinion of him, said, can such a man as you, Arignotus, from whom alone I hoped to hear the truth, be fraught also with fumes and phantasmes? you have verified the Proverb, I have found coales for treasure. If, said, Arignotus, you neither believe me, nor Dinomachus, nor Cleodemus, nor Eucrates, whom can you produce more Authentick to disprove us? A man much admired, said I, Democritus the Abderite. Who was so smally

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perswaded of such fictions, that shutting himself up in a monument without the City, he there lived, wrote, and composed nights and days. And when certain boys, desirous to scare and fright him, arrayed themselves like Ghosts in black Garments, and wearing counterfeit vizards on their heads, surrounded him, and frequently skipt about him, he neither feared their disguises, nor at all regarded them, but wrote on, and bid them cease to play the fools. So firmly did he believe, that souls were nothing after their departure from the body. Certainly, replied Eucrates, Democritus was the veryer fool to think so I will therefore report one story more, in which I my self was an Actor, and took it not up upon relation. Perchance when you hear it, Tychiades, the truth of the narration will convince you. When I lived in Ægypt, yet a boy, sent thither by my father, to learn their Arts, I had a

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desire to sail to Coptus, and from thence to hear the famous Memnon sound at the rising of the Sun. Whom I heard, not as others ordinarily do, yield an unsignificant sound; but Memnon himself utter'd Oracles to me, and open'd his moth in seven verses. Which, but that I should digress, I would repeat to you. As we were at Sea, there sayled in company with us a certain holy Priest of Memphis, admired for his wisdome, and skill'd in all the learning of the Ægyptians. He was said to have lived 320

years in a Cave under ground, and there to have learnt Magick of Isis. You mean my Tutor Pancrates, replyed Arignotus, he is a religious man, shaven, goes in linnen, is very learned, speaks Greek purely, is tall of stature, hath a bow nose, full lips, and small legs. The very same answer'd Eucrates. At first I knew not who he was. But when I saw him, after our arrival in the Port, among

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many other miracles which he wrought, ride upon Crocodiles, approach such cruel beasts, and they to reverence him, and wag their tayls, I guessed him to be some sacred person; And by degrees insinuated my self into his acquaintance and friendship. So that at length he revealed all his secrets and mysteries to me. To be short, he perswaded me to leave all my servants at Memphis, and to accompany him alone; who promised we should not want attendants. And from that time thus we lived. When we came into an Inn, he taking the bolt of the door, or a broom or bar, and clothing it, spoke a charm to it, and to enable it to go, and in all things to resemble a man. The thing going forth, would draw water, provide and dress our supper, and diligently wait and attend upon us. After his business was done, he pronounced another charm, and turn'd the broom into a broom again

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and the pestle into a pestle. This was an Art, which though I laboured much, I could not learn of him. For this was a mystery which he denied me, though in all things else he were open. One day, hiding my self in a dark corner, I overheard his charm, which was but three syllables. He having appointed the bolt its business, went into the market. The next day, he having some other imployment in the market, I taking the pestle, and apparelling it, in like manner pronounced the syllable, and bid it fetch me some water. When it had brought me a bason full, 'tis enough, said I, fetch no more, but be a pestle again. But it was so far from obeying me, that it ceast not to fetch water till it had overflown the room. I, much troubled at the accident, and fearing least if Pancrates should return (as he did) he would be much displeased, took an Axe and cut the pestle in two. Then both parts taking

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several buckets fetcht water. And instead of one, I had two servants. In the mean time Pancrates came in, and perceiving what had happen'd, transform'd them into wood again, as they

were before I utter'd the spell. Shortly after he secretly left me, and vanishing went I know not whither. And can you now said Dinomachus, make a man of a bolt? I have but one half of the Art replied he, nor am I able to return him into his former shape: if therefore, I once make him a water-bearer, we shall be driven from the house by a deluge. Will you old men, said I, never leave to speak monstrous fictions? if for no other reason, yet for these young boyes sakes, forbear your improbable and terrible narrations till some other time, least they be insensibly filled with uncouth affrightments and fables. Accustome them not to hear things which will make impressions,

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and trouble them all their life; make them start at every sound, and fill them with diverse superstitions. You do well, said Eucrates, to put me in mind of superstition. Pray what think you of Oracles, Tychiades, and Predictions and Prophesies, uttered by people inspired, and heard from Curtains, or delivered in verse by a Virgin, which foretells things to come? Cannot these things fall under your belief neither? I forbear to tell you that I have a sacred ring whose seal bears the image of Apollo, and that the God himself frequently talks with me; least you should think I fain this of my self, out of arrogance, I will only tell you what I saw and heard from Amphilochus at Mallus, who entertained me with a long discourse, and consulted the Oracle concerning my affairs. Next I will report to you what I saw at Pergamus, and heard at Patara. When I sail'd homeward from Ægypt, being

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inform'd that there was an open, infallible Oracle at Mallus, which verbatim gave clear answers to every mans inquiries, written in a note, and deliver'd to his Priest, I thought I should do well, as I sayl'd by, to try the Oracle, and consult the God concerning my future fortunes. I by this entrance perceiving that Eucrates was likely to lengthen his story, and that he had begun no very compendious discourse of Oracles, and not holding it fit to contradict them longer, leaving him sailing from Ægypt to Mallus (for I saw them discontented with my presence, as an opposer of their fictions) I will take my leave, said I, and go seek Leontichus; For I have urgent occasion to meet with him. You, who think humane passages not sufficient, have the liberty to call the Gods into your fabulous discourses. And having so said, I departed. They, glad of their freedom, in likelihood entertained and feasted themselves with impostures.

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I, cloy'd with what I heard, am come to you Philocles, just like those who having drunk new wine, and swoln their belly, have need to vomit: I would give any money for a potion of oblivion to make me forget, and to wash away the mischievous remembrance of what I heard. Who still, methinks, see monsters, Devils, and Hecates. Philocles. I also, suffer'd in your relations, Tychiades. For they say, that they not only grow distracted, and fear the water, who are bitten by mad dogs, but if the man bitten bite another, 'tis equal to the bite of a dog, and begets the like distemper; so you having been bitten by Eucrates fictions, have bitten me also, and filled my fancy with Devils. Tychiades. However let us take courage, since we have an excellent Antidote to cure us, truth, and right reason: Which if we make our rule, we shall be troubled with no such empty and vain falsehoods.